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Esteban

DON ESTERIN

Vol II

DON ESTEBAN.

VOL II.

THE HISTORY OF

THE KING OF SPAIN

BY DON ESTEBAN

DOY ESTEBAN

VOL II.

DON ESTEBAN;

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A SPANIARD.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

B **IN THREE VOLUMES.**

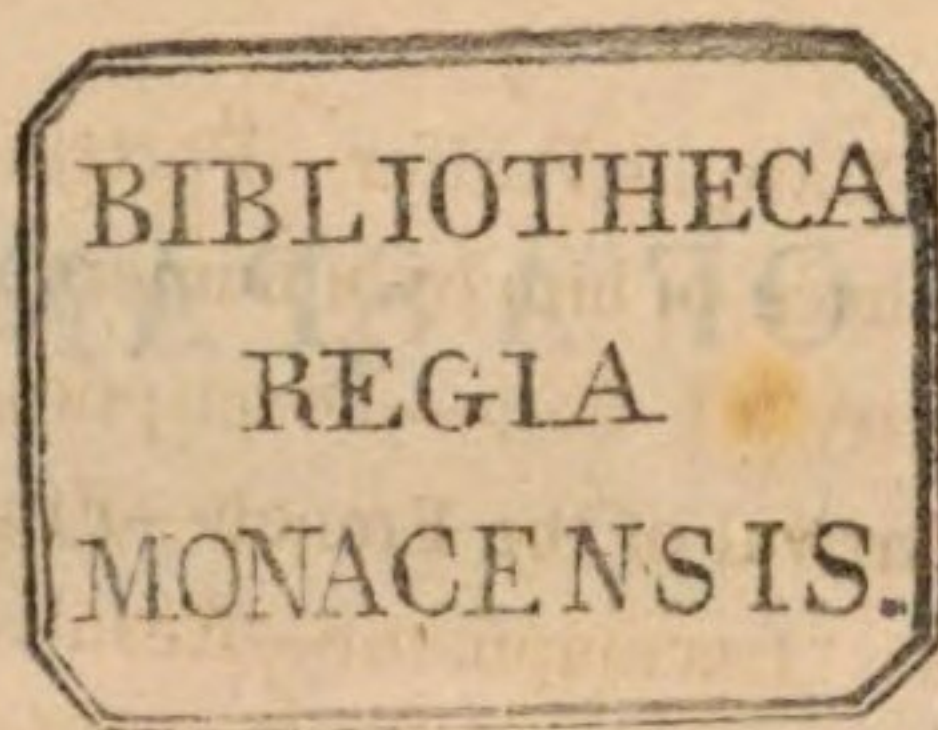
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CONTENTS

OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

	Page.
Esteban is sent to the Marquis Porlier—Portrait of that Partisan—Military Chase of him by a numerous French Force—The Peasantry of Soto—Description of the Seguidilla Dance—Arrival of the French—Flight of the Villagers—A Night Encampment—Results of the Chase—Increase and boldness of the Guerrillas.....	1—18

CHAPTER II.

Esteban's Return to his Division—Siege of Soria—General Wandermassen's Expedition against Montijo's Troops—Guerrilla Mode of Life—Numantia's Ruins, and the brave Ramirez.....	19—31
--	-------

CHAPTER III.

Ramirez's Melancholy Story of his Daughter Dorotea, and Death of Raymundo.....	32—54
--	-------

CHAPTER IV.

Farther Account of the Guerrillas—Esteban is sent to Mina—Distress of the Inhabitants of Proveda—Secluded Spot by the Duero—Esteban's Arrival at Agreda, the Birth-place of his beloved Isabella—Cruelty of Colonel Darquier of the Imperial Guard—Esteban's Attack on a Detachment of his Troops—Death of the sanguinary Dunier—A Fainting Lady—Esteban wounded.....	55—78
---	-------

CHAPTER V.

	Page.
Esteban's Novel Situation—His Fair Nurse—His Passion for her—He discovers who she is—The Marquis one of Darquier's Victims—Anton's Reflections on Human Vicissitudes, and his Adventure at Madrid—Don Facundo's Arrival at Agreda, and his Interview with Esteban—Isabella's Aunt, and Dona Lucia.....	79—101

CHAPTER VI.

Esteban's Removal to Dona Lucia's—Domestic Life in Spain—Ladies' Morning Devotions ; their Dresses on those occasions ; their <i>Cortejos</i> , or Beaux—Manner of spending their Time at Home—Promenades and Tertulias—Anniversary of Dona Lucia's Saint's Day	102—116
---	---------

CHAPTER VII.

Esteban's History of his Infancy—Whimsical Dresses of Children—The Procession of the <i>Corpus Christi</i> , in which Esteban performs the part of an Angel—He is placed at School, and obtains a Prize—Public Ceremony of the Distribution of Prizes—Don Ignacio's Devotions at the School of Christ—His Spiritual Director, or a specimen of a Spanish Saint—The Capuchin's Convent—Esteban's Desire and Efforts to become a Saint—He is ordained in <i>Prima</i> —The Bishop's Palace—Ceremonies of the Tonsure—Examination by the Bishop—Enters the College of the Benedictine Monks—Curious Particulars of that College—End of the History of his early Life	117—152
---	---------

CHAPTER VIII.

Esteban being nearly cured of his Wounds, leaves Agreda and joins his Division—Field of Action of the Guerrillas	
--	--

CONTENTS.

vii

Page

—He enters in Disguise a Village occupied by some
French Troops—Conversation with a French Soldier—
Attack by his Partisans on the French—Melancholy
Story of Teresa.....152—165

CHAPTER IX.

Advance towards the Frontier—Unexpected Meeting in
Roncesvalles—Raymundo's Adventures—His Account
of the Battle of Vittoria, and of his Affecting Rencontre
with his Father and Sister—Meeting between Raymundo
and Ramirez166—191

CHAPTER IX.*

Cessation of Hostilities in Spain—Esteban's Journey
Homewards—Sees his Agreda Friends—Feelings on ap-
proaching the Scenes of his Boyhood—Desolation at
Cigales—Joy at Embracing his Family—A retrospective
Glance at the Proceedings of the Cortes of Cadiz..192—205

CHAPTER XI.

on Lorenzo's Letter to Don Ignacio—His Arrival at
Madrid, and the State of Popular Feeling there—In-
trigues of the Ecclesiastical Faction to overthrow the
Constitution—A Fair—Outrages and Insults of the De-
magogues—Ferdinand's Entry into Spain, and Progress
towards the Capital—His Decree issued at Valencia on
the 4th of May—Arrival of General Eguia in the Capi-
tal, and Fury of the Soldiery and the Mob—Ferdinand's
Entry into Madrid and Termination of the Constitu-
tional Government.....206—229

CHAPTER XII.

A Ball at Don Ignacio's—Sudden Arrival of Don Lo-

renzo with the news of Don Ignacio's being sentenced to Death—Flight of the latter into France, accompanied by Esteban—Their Journey, and Description of the Province of Biscay—Government and Manners of the Inhabitants—Beauty of the women—Dispute between two Rival Parties of Mountaineers—Appearance of the Country near the Pyrenees.230—251

CHAPTER XIII.

The French Frontier—Feelings of the Exiles on leaving their Native Land—A Village Church in Bearn—Manner of Travelling—Arrival at Bayonne—Raymundo joins the Exiles, having been banished from Spain—Commissions of State in Spain, and their Arbitrary Proceedings—Esteban's return to Spain252—267

DON ESTEBAN;

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A SPANIARD.

CHAPTER I.

Here was the camp, the watch flame, and the host,
Here the bold peasant storm'd the dragon's nest:
Still does he mark it with triumphant boast,
And point to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

I HAD not been in Osma many days when our general intrusted me with a despatch for the Marquis Porlier, then at Logroño. I set out, accompanied by four dragoons, belonging to my corps, and by Anton, whom I kept in my service, the other servant having not yet made his appearance; and we reached Logroño just as Porlier had received information of the chase which Generals Loison and Solignac were about to make after his little army.

Porlier was rather short in stature, but extremely well made ; his countenance very expressive, and animated by fine, dark, penetrating eyes. His address was highly fascinating and accompanied by great frankness and vivacity ; and he possessed much generosity of character. His patriotism, too, was so ardent, that to it he sacrificed his whole fortune, his repose, and his life. As for his military talents and activity in the field, no better proof can be given, than the manner in which he eluded the pursuit of the two French Generals, and the little which the superior numbers and tactics of the French soldiers availed them.

It was the intention of Generals Loison and Solignac, when they marched from Vittoria and Miranda, to throw themselves at once, by both banks of the Ebro, upon Logroño, in hopes of surprising the Marquesito, whose numerous guerrillas intercepted the communication between Bayonne and Madrid, and who made incursions to the very gates of Burgos, Miranda,

Vittoria, &c. General Loison had between five and six thousand men, and Solignac about seven or eight thousand. The baggage, and even the knapsacks of the infantry, were left behind, that the soldiers might be lighter for running up the mountains. As soon as they reached Logroño, they immediately took possession of all the gates and outlets on the right bank of the Ebro, and also the bridge leading to the left of that river. They then entered the town, and, to their utter astonishment, met with not a single guerrilla, when they thought themselves quite certain of having us all in their power.

The Marquesito, perfectly aware of the enemy's movements, and of the time of their probable arrival at Logroño, had sent his troops by cross roads to the high mountains of Castille, leaving behind a small party, with instructions to draw the enemy on in an opposite direction to that which the main body of his little army had taken. This stratagem succeeded. Next day

General Solignac set out in pursuit of this party, which he discovered at Najera, and pursued as far as St. Domingo de la Calzada. Here they lost sight of them, and remained two days before they could obtain any information about us. Having at last learned that we had taken the road to Soto, a town situated among the mountains, the residence of a provincial Junta, and containing magazines of arms and ammunition, they set off for it. At about ten leagues' distance they got intimation of us, and General Loison sent a corps of about five hundred men, infantry and cavalry, to pursue us, himself remaining behind with the main body.

Porlier, on receiving this intelligence, dispatched me to Soto, where his provincial Junta were holding their conferences, that they might be apprized of the danger, and be prepared for their departure. On my arrival there, I heard, as I approached the irregular square into which the balconies both of the alcalde's

and curate's houses looked, the discordant music of a tamborine, a zambomba,^a and a broken guitar; and on entering, I found the girls of the village solemnizing the festival of their patron saint by dances and games. A few young men were also there, participating in their pleasures, while most of the old men were seated with the old women on benches, and on the ground all round the square, leaning against the walls of their houses and of the church. The curate was engaged in a discussion with the sacristan, who was also the barber, notary, schoolmaster, and organist of the village, and now and then cast a good-humoured look on these innocent pleasures, while some of the wise-
acres of the village formed a circle round the alcalde, and listened to his discourse.

The dance in which the girls were engaged,

^a A rustic instrument made of a piece of parchment laid over the mouth of a jug, with a hole in the middle to admit of a little stick, which is moved up and down, and makes a grumbling noise.

was the seguidillas. It is danced with eight, like the French cotillions ; at each corner the four couple describing, though only *en passant*, the principal traits of the fandango. It is then that a Spanish woman, dressed in her costume, accompanying the music with her castanets, and beating time with her heels with exact precision, becomes one of the most enchanting objects in the world. All these village girls wore very tight stays, and their petticoats projected from their hips, and fell in numerous plaits all round their forms. Their heads were covered with *monteras*^a not unlike those of the men, only they formed two angles in front, and allowed two long tresses to fall on the shoulders. A necklace of glass beads, some few of silver, and a pair of enormous buckles on their shoes, composed all their trinkets ; except that several wore also large brass rings on their fingers, ornament-

^a A sort of conical shaped cap, worn by the peasants, made of cloth, and some of black velvet.

ed with the image of the Virgin or of some saint.

As soon as I appeared in the square, and enquired for the alcalde, the dances were suspended, and the people all flocked around me. —“I am sorry,” cried I, “to disturb your pleasures; but the French are marching on Soto, and will be here to-morrow at latest: the Marquesito is coming to-night, with his troops; you must get rations ready for his men, and prepare yourselves to retire with us farther into the mountains.”

Immediately the whole crowd withdrew sorrowfully to their houses, to collect what each was to carry away, and procure the rations for our troops. I also informed the members of the Junta of our march, and requested them to pack up their papers and documents, which was immediately done.

In the evening Porlier arrived with part of his troops. He had given orders to the priests and alcaldes of the other villages to delay the march

of the French as much as possible, by presenting them with refreshments, and shewing a feigned zeal in their favour. The peasants were directed to answer their enquiries always equivocally, and to watch their movements from the heights. Upon the whole they performed this duty well, deceiving the French whenever opportunity offered, and protesting they had seen nothing of us. But the dying horses which we were compelled occasionally to abandon on the roads, indicated to them, in spite of these precautions, that we were not far off.

Beyond the town is a very steep mountain, on the side of which a winding road ascends ; and by this, on the following day at sun rise, we retreated in the presence of the French.—All the people of Soto accompanied us. One of the young men was ordered by the curate to take charge of the holy pix, which he did, kissing it first with the utmost devotion ; another carried the silver Christ ; others the images of those virgins and saints that were reckoned the most

miraculous, and also the holy banners and standards; others took the care of the old and the sick, who were placed on litters. One poor woman alone, a lunatic, who was in such a state of mind that she could not be mastered, was left behind, shut up in a cave; the curate having previously read the prayers for the dying over her, lest she should not live till their return. The alcalde, who had assembled all the peasants, armed with pikes and fowling-pieces, ordered them to march at the head, escorting the women and children, who, all in tears, drove before them the few goats and cows they had been able to collect. This march was closed by the young men who carried the sacred relics, and by the curate dressed in his sacerdotal habit, and carrying in his hand the book of the evangelists. The whole procession moved by the path which Porlier had pointed out for them. Now and then the young women, with their children at their breasts, cast back sorrowful looks on their abandoned homes; and the men stopped to contemplate the enemy,

moving at the foot of the ravines below, and sending up their volleys of musketry to our troops, who crowned the heights. I accompanied for a while this distressing procession, no less moved than the rest, yet admiring the patriotism and fortitude shown by some of these worthy people.

The enemy had come up with our rear guard, and taken two or three prisoners, but when they came within a league of Soto, they were repulsed by a brisk fire of musketry. They were now hallooing from the opposite side of the ravine which separated them from us—"Stop there, *brigands*;" and those of our soldiers who were nearest, placing themselves on the rocks, and pointing their guns on every side, saluted them with bullets and curses.

To cover his retreat, the Marquesito left a company of cavalry before the gate by which the French were to enter Soto, and, on the other side of the river, which runs at the bottom of the ravine, he placed four or five hundred in-

fantry on the rocks and terraces which command the town. From this position these troops could do much execution, while they themselves could retire without running the smallest risk.

The enemy's advance, seeing that our position was not assailable in front, sent about two hundred riflemen down into the ravine to ford the river and climb the opposite mountain. From thence they fired upon us, but without effect, till they retired round a little chapel, situated on the top of the mountain, where they remained in no very agreeable situation, being open alike to our shots and our abuse.

Towards dusk, news was brought that General Loison was approaching with the whole of his division. Immediately our drums beat a rally, and we all abandoned our posts, except a few who remained on the heights to watch the motions of the enemy. Soon after, a pretty brisk fire of musketry was heard at the bottom of the ravine. It soon ceased, and a deep silence

succeeded, from which we imagined it must have taken place between two parties of their own troops who had not recognised each other.

The French now advanced rapidly upon Soto, and we retired to the neighbouring heights, from which we could hear the hollow shouts of the soldiers, breaking open the doors to procure provisions and lodging. In the midst of a thousand confused sounds, infinitely multiplied by the mountain echoes, an explosion was also heard, the flaming beams of a building were seen in the air, and soon after it was followed by a loud crash of falling walls, the whole proceeding from the place where we had our magazine.

During the night a multitude of fires were lighted successively on the opposite mountains, which the illusion produced by the darkness seemed to bring quite close to us. By their light, we could perceive the French soldiers, to the number of twenty or thirty in each group, cooking their supper, or wrapped up in their great coats, sitting or lying along the ground in

mingled confusion. Others were busied around the flame, arranging their arms and accoutrements for the labours of the commencing day. Groups of officers, mingled with their men, were glad to share with them the warmth and cheerful blaze of the faggots. The strong contrast of light and shade on some of the prominent figures, who caught the gleam of the fires, and the darkness that reigned beyond the small circle, produced a most striking and picturesque effect.

Early next day we quitted our posts on the heights, and took the road of Cerbera, closely followed by the French. On the approach of their compact bodies, we retreated from rock to rock, and from position to position without for one moment ceasing to fire or to annoy them. In this manner we destroyed complete columns in our flight, without giving them an opportunity to retaliate. For two or three days longer the French continued in our pursuit; but,

tired at last of the chase, they took up their quarters at Arnedo, and shortly after returned to Logroño.

In summing up the results of this expedition we find, that the French, who were at least four times as strong as us, lost between six and seven hundred men, and returned to the place from whence they had started without gaining a single object; for Porlier, passing with his troops from the mountains of Castille into those of Asturias, continued his incursions to the gates of those towns situated along the road to Madrid; having scarcely lost twenty men in all.

Similar chases against other partisans had similar results. Thus, often dispersed by superior force in one place, we appeared a few days afterwards re-organized in another; till the French began to think that we came out of the bowels of the earth. To-day they thought us destroyed, and the next day they beheld us re-appear with apparently renewed strength.

On the departure of the French troops from a variety of posts to join the armies of Portugal and the south of Spain, our Guerrilla parties increased considerably, and with our numbers increased our boldness; so that it became necessary for the French to send stronger and stronger escorts with their couriers and convoys. The booty that fell into our hands often made up in no inconsiderable degree for the ravages committed by the invaders; while the young men, finding it more easy to live by this sort of life than by any other, flocked to our standards in great numbers.

Many of the chiefs who some months before had scarcely two or three hundred men under their command, were now at the head of formidable divisions, and often carried off whole convoys of provisions and ammunition, destined for the armies of the south; indeed, as these convoys had to pass through six or seven hundred miles of territory, every inch of which was occupied by Guerrillas, they seldom reached their

destination. The peasants whose beasts had been put in requisition, always took care to give us notice before hand of the exact number of able men who escorted the convoys, and at the moment of attack co-operated with us, never neglecting any opportunity of getting away with whatever property their beasts might be loaded with.

The common escort for a courier to the smallest distance was three hundred dragoons ; and when destined to France from the interior of Spain, between two and three thousand men were considered necessary, and even then they were not quite sure of keeping us off. In November, 1810, when General Foix was sent by Massena to France, he was escorted by two thousand men, and on his return from France by three thousand, notwithstanding which he had a very narrow escape from Longa near Pancorbo. In the private despatches of the French Generals, which we so often intercepted, we found them continually deploring the necessity they were under of detaching or break-

ing their divisions for the purpose of maintaining public tranquillity in the conquered provinces, overawing the country, and retaining it in subjection.

The daily losses of the French in their attempts to procure provisions, and to keep up the communications, were ten times more than any they could have sustained against an enemy who would have met them in open battle. Thus harassed on every side by an armed population, they were ignorant of the number of enemies they had to contend with, and their armies were consumed by continual fatigues, nightly watchings, and anxieties. From Irun to Cadiz, their troops were in a state of continual blockade, and they, in reality, could not call themselves masters of more ground than that upon which they actually trod.

As this system of war in detail had neither any fixed object, nor could possibly be attended by any striking victory to keep up the ardour of the men, their courage and fortitude gra-

dually gave way ; and at last they became terrified even at their own shadows. Spain seemed to them a land of assassins, and they retaliated on the weak and inoffensive for the deeds of the powerful ; thus again increasing the number of their enemies.

CHAPTER II.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang e'en thou must fail to soothe?

BYRON.

HAVING now joined my division, which with that of Duran was laying siege to Soria, I was employed in preventing supplies from being introduced into the town; at length, after a month's blockade, we carried the town by storm, forcing the garrison to retire into the citadel, with the loss of about a hundred and fifty killed and thirty taken prisoners. But after a month's ineffectual efforts to reduce the fortress, owing to our total want of battering artillery, we de-

molished the fortifications of the town, and raised the siege, the besieged having found means to inform General Wandermassen of their situation. This General was at that time about Aranda, with ten thousand troops, in pursuit of the Curate Merino, from whom he took some members of his provincial junta, whom he shot. But Merino retaliated severely upon the French ; for, having some months after made upwards of seven hundred Polish prisoners, he shot two hundred of them.

How the besieged succeeded in giving information to their friends in Aranda of the danger of their situation, was a matter of the greatest surprise to us ; for however ingenious the French were in finding out means to convey information from one place to another by means of spies, we generally contrived to discover them. Whenever any person was caught on suspicion of being a spy, he was stript naked, to ascertain whether he had any papers, plans, drawings, or peculiar marks ; if any thing of the

sort were found upon him, his ears were instantly cut off, and a red hot iron, with the word *espia*, applied to his forehead. These marks he bore for the remainder of his days, though very few survived the infamy attached to them. If by chance any of them continued the same occupation, and again fell into our hands, the next operation was taking off their heads.

The division of General Wandermassen arrived at Soria whilst we were still in its vicinity. He reinforced the garrison, raised again the city walls, forcing all the people of the town and of the neighbouring villages to work at them without pay, and afterwards came himself in pursuit of us, with nearly eight thousand men; but we retreated into the high mountains in the direction of Almazan. In these mountains the French often endeavoured, by means of their superior numbers, to surround us, and oblige us to come to close engagement. We retreated, however, from height to height, and from rock to rock,

without ceasing our fire, or permitting them to attain their object.

In these skirmishes, some of the peasants, whose dwellings the French had destroyed, would come out, armed with muskets, and take their aim deliberately. The women also would occasionally inspire their husbands with courage, by singing all the wild patriotic songs, in which the doom of every Frenchman was irretrievably fixed. Even very young children acted as our spies. Frequently boys seven or eight years old, offered themselves as guides to a French party, and leading them straight to an ambuscade, shouted "Viva Fernando VII." and ran off, leaving them exposed to the fire, which we instantly opened upon them. It often happened, however, that when the enemy's division stopped very late at night near deserted towns or villages, finding themselves in want of every thing, they would disperse themselves on all sides, to collect from the neighbouring villages

whatever yet remained in them to form their encampments. On the morning after their departure, we used to find the ground strewed here and there with the skins of the sheep just slain, pitchers, wine skins, clothes of every form and colour, barracks of planks covered with leaves or straw, tents formed of all sorts of stuffs, &c.

It should seem that at this time all moral feeling had disappeared from the French army. In their greedy searches after plunder, they profaned the churches and spoiled them of their ornaments, opened the tombs, scattered the enclosed relics, and spent their fury in profaning the very ashes of the dead, in revenge for not being able to reach the living. But this want of principle could not fail to sap the very foundation of that military discipline, without which no regular troops can conquer, much less conciliate the minds of the vanquished.

General Wandermassen, finding by this time that if he followed us for ever, he would gain

nothing, but more probably lose every man of his division, returned to Soria, levying contributions on every village in his way back, and in such a manner, as to exasperate the people and increase the number of his enemies. The soldiers, after sacking whole villages, made those of the peaceful inhabitants who had not fled at their approach, pay for all the rest, carrying away as hostages the priests and alcaldes, and often the richest inhabitants also, intending to keep them till the rest came forward and paid the contributions demanded. This, however, was generally an ineffectual manœuvre, for most of the alcaldes and priests contrived to surprise the vigilance of their keepers ; and, in fact, the contributions were seldom raised in these mountainous districts.

When we now perceived that the enemy would not follow us beyond Yanguos, we resolved upon following them. We hung constantly on the rear of their division, harassed them night and day, surprised stragglers, made

an attack when we had the advantage of number or position, dispersed when surrounded, to assemble again in an appointed place, re-appeared, stood still, or multiplied ourselves in effect by rapid marches, which the local knowledge of the roads and defiles made easy for us; and from an ambush fell upon the enemy, as the storm falls in the tropical regions, when least expected.

One day, after following Wandermassen's division first to Soria, and then to within a few leagues of Aranda, I wandered away from the road, and entering a thicket, I saw ten or twelve nuns, all on their knees, fervently praying. These poor creatures, some of whom had never been without the precincts of their cloister, alarmed at the reported arrival of the French, had abandoned their convent, and in their fright, having walked as far as their limbs could bear them, at last concealed themselves in this wood. On hearing my horse's footsteps, they had fallen on their knees to recommend their

souls to heaven, believing the French coming. There was a look of candour, mixed with resigned submission to the will of Providence, in the countenances of these poor nuns, which excited the most lively compassion. I shared with them the few biscuits I had with me, and escorted them as far as their convent, which was not very distant from Osma.

Soon after joining my corps, we entered that town amidst general acclamations. Men, women, and children, all came out to embrace us. The joy manifested by the inhabitants during our stay was some compensation to us for the hardships we had undergone ; and our time was spent in dances and entertainments of all kinds. Exposed to so many dangers and privations, we made haste to enjoy life when an opportunity offered : as with us nothing could last long, we made the most of the present. Frequently in absolute want of the necessaries of life, and wearied with a thousand toils and fatigues, could we do otherwise than eagerly snatch those short

and transitory moments of repose so dearly bought?

The consequence of a life of peril like this, was to make us look upon death as an almost trifling event in our career. We pitied our comrades when wounded; but when once the vital spark had flown, no more was said of them. A sigh or a solitary tear was the utmost the falling patriot could expect from his best comrade and friend. Such indifference was, in fact, necessary to our preservation. But this dangerous and agitated life had its charms, as well as its evils. The unforeseen occurrences which were continually happening, drove away the ennui of melancholy, and made us find pleasure even in the midst of our perils.

We now returned to those classic spots, sacred to every Spanish patriot, where Numantia once stood. Often, when reposing on its mouldered and solitary ruins, have I recalled to my imagination those days of Spanish glory when its citizens boldly defended its walls

against the Roman legions, and at last rushed into the flames rather than submit to slavery!

One day, as I again directed my steps towards those ruins, I observed a fellow-soldier, named Ramirez, seated on a stone, his elbows resting on his knees, and his head clasped in his hands. He was so buried in thought that he did not observe my approach. He was not more than thirty-six years of age; but his forehead was wrinkled, his hair almost grey, and his countenance marked with such deep lines of care, that at first sight he seemed much older. He was naturally reserved, or a prey to intense grief; for he associated with none, and we had scarcely exchanged salutations. Yet I sometimes observed his sunken eyes fixed on me with an expression of such bitter anguish as I could neither understand nor forget. Once in an attack we were both engaged in, he placed himself beside me, and exclaimed, as we charged the enemy, "Push on, Lara, push on; you too have wrongs to avenge." He uttered this with

a look of mingled joy and horror, and then fought with a valour amounting almost to desperation. Once or twice afterwards he seemed on the point of addressing me; but, suddenly stopping, he left me abruptly, and for some time became more reserved than ever. This extraordinary conduct strongly excited my curiosity, and when I now saw him, I deliberated whether or not I should address him.

At this moment he cast a wild look around, and, perceiving me, hastened towards me; then, suddenly retracing a little his steps, remained silent for some time,—his eyes fixed on mine with an expression as if he were struggling with some painful feeling. At length he burst into tears. Mine too flowed, from concern at his agony.—“For shame!” cried he, passing his hand hastily over his eyes, “for shame! we besprinkle our cheeks with our own tears, when it ought to be with the blood of our enemies!”

“Explain yourself,” said I, “and lighten

your heart a little, by pouring its grief into the bosom of one who would be a friend."

"No. Such a confidence would destroy your happiness."

I still insisted, and he added—

"Poor Lara! you little imagine how closely my troubles are connected with yourself!"

"What do you mean?" cried I, anxiously.

"Explain yourself."

"If you must sooner or later hear them, hear them now.—Your brother, Don Raymundo,—I knew him. You owe to his memory a bloody revenge—a revenge which should be drawn from the veins of every Frenchman who falls within your reach. His spirit is in heaven; but it loudly calls to be avenged."

I was horror-struck at this fatal intelligence. My heart seemed seared, and my tears refused to flow. I felt my throat swell; my utterance became impeded; and I reclined my head against Ramirez' shoulder, who stood with his eyes filled

with tears. There was a long pause; but the veil that hid Ramirez' inward grief, had been torn asunder; he found a sympathizing heart, and his own began to feel its sorrow sufficiently lessened to soothe with consoling expressions that which he had imparted to mine.

"The best consolation I can afford you," added he, "is the narrative of my own miseries. Yours will then appear light and trifling."

CHAPTER III.

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
A form so soft and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to earth!

Stanzas—BYRON.

“I AM a native of Villa-Castin,” said Ramirez, seating himself down on a mossy bank, “where I lived happy with my wife and two children, a son and a daughter, till the arrival of the ferocious Dunier. My son had reached his fifteenth year, his sister her sixteenth, and their mutual affection excited the interest of all who knew them. Anxious to serve his country’s cause, my son tried by every persuasive means to obtain my permission, which I would not give

him on account of his youth and inexperience. It was only on the arrival of your brother, Don Raymundo, and through his persuasion that I consented to his departure."

"I should, however, have told you, that Don Raymundo no sooner saw my daughter, than he felt for her the most ardent passion, and spoke of it to me with that frankness which characterized him. He was then at the head of a cavalry detachment of the Empecinado's troops, having abandoned his original intention of proceeding to Cadiz to join Ballasteros, in whose army he held a commission. His youth, courage, gallantry, and personal attractions could not pass unheeded by Dorotea, on whose charms he bestowed all his admiration. They loved each other most tenderly; and, indeed, they seemed formed for each other,—they both had the same exalted feelings of generosity, the same goodness of heart, cheerfulness of temper, and warmth of affection.

"The day for my son's leaving home in Don

Raymundo's company was a day of mourning with all. They went, however, and we heard nothing more of them, till about a month afterwards, when we did hear,—alas! but to our despair.

“ I was then just recovering from a serious illness, which had attacked me shortly after their departure ; when one day, as my wife and I were sitting sorrowfully on the balcony, we heard drums, and presently saw a crowd of people following a body of French troops, in the midst of whom were two youths and a priest tied together. Eager to learn who they were, I rose to descend ; but I was hardly on my legs when my child's and Don Raymundo's name, uttered by the multitude that surrounded them, struck my ear. I heard no more, but fell back senseless in my seat. The cries and lamentations of my wife brought the servants to my assistance, and I was carried to bed, to all appearance dead.

“ Dorotea, the wretched Dorotea, was not at

that moment present ; she had gone out to see a friend ; but the fatal intelligence of the arrival of her brother and lover, conducted by French troops to be executed in the town, soon reached her ears. After the first violent effects of such bitter news, her excessive love for both suggested to her the hope that she might move the heart of Dunier, by throwing herself at his feet and imploring his mercy.

“ She immediately came home to ask my permission, but finding me still insensible, she resolved to go at all hazards, having first obtained the sanction of her afflicted mother. Accompanied by a maid servant, she directed her steps to the house where Dunier had taken up his quarters, and they were introduced to his apartments. His ferocious look and repulsive features made her blood run cold with terror, and her hope became almost extinct ; still she fell on her knees, and said with broken accents, that she was the sister of Manuel.

“ I will repeat to you, if I can, all that the

heartless ruffian said to my poor daughter. You would think none but a demon in human form could have so delighted to add insult to cruelty.

“ At the sight of her humble and affecting attitude,—‘ Well, well, what do you ask, child?’ said Dunier.

“ Dorotea, thinking the term *child* with him also implied pity, felt a little comforted, and found courage to proceed :—‘ If the name of sister, and friend of those unhappy youths, your prisoners, were not enough to declare my wishes, let my tears, my bitter tears, speak for me!’—

“ Dunier said nothing, but looked at her with a laugh on his lip, and Dorotea continued entreating him to grant me time to implore the clemency of the Governor of the Province, in favour of a son, whose tender age might almost excuse his fault.

“ Dunier, instead of attending to Dorotea’s entreaties, devoured her with his eyes, and began to harbour in his infamous breast a very

different feeling from that of pity. He therefore not only refused to grant her request, but showed some impatience to execute the orders which, he said, he had received from the Governor; taking a cruel pleasure in increasing her fears; and, while she was on her knees, her arms raised in an entreating attitude, he walked up and down the room with the utmost indifference.

“Suddenly, however, he approached her, and taking her by the arm, he said,—‘That attitude, my child, does not suit such a charmer as you. Rise and sit down here near me; and let us treat more leisurely this business, which, indeed is an extremely delicate one. Yet what does not beauty obtain in this world?—all, in truth all!—come, dry up your tears, for love is not fond of this sort of pouting. Give me that little hand, which, by heavens! is worthy our Emperor’s sceptre!’

“Dorotea, who, notwithstanding her innocence, perceived that that light indecent manner

did not suit the awful situation in which she was, withdrew it, and again falling on her knees, earnestly demanded him to grant her prayer.

“ ‘ Come, rise and take your seat again, for I already feel too much love for you to bear to see you at my feet. Now, what return may I expect from you, if I save the life of your brother and your friend ?’

“ ‘ If my father’s wealth,’ replied she, ‘ is not sufficient, I am resolved to offer my own life for theirs ; for, indeed, I would gladly die to save them.’

“ At these words, the wretch burst into a loud laugh—‘ Pooh, pooh,’ said he, ‘ what a foolish little girl you are !—to give your own life for another is a thing which not even an idiot would do. What ! could you bear to have a thick rope tied round that delicate neck ?—to be dragged by the executioner up the platform, there to hang in sight of the whole world, your features distorted, and your countenance black-

ened by death!—And you would undergo all this to save your brother?’

“ ‘ Oh, heavens! heavens!’ exclaimed she, horror-struck.

“ ‘ Well, well!’ cried Dunier, interrupting her, ‘ I do not require so much—not even the twentieth part—and depend on it you have it in your power to save your brother. As for your father’s wealth, which you offered me, you must not reckon upon it; it is mine, from his having sent his son to the *brigands*! Still every thing may be arranged, provided you agree to what I ask;—yes, every thing—I give you my word for it.’

“ ‘ Yes,’ replied my poor innocent daughter, ‘ I will do whatever you desire of me, were I even to be ordered to France to labour with my own hands in your fields, and tend your flocks.’

“ ‘ What do you talk of?—Do you think I would ever consent to see those beautiful hands lose their softness, and those tender limbs their

elasticity, with the manual labours of the fields?

—I ask still less.'

"The innocent Dorotea could not understand his meaning; but when he came to explain himself further, her horror was soon changed into indignation, and she vowed sooner to perish by her own hands than listen to his infamous proposals.

"Her tyrant, mortified at the firmness she displayed, paced the room at long strides, swearing he would have those vile brigands, (as he called them,) burnt alive; and for a long time he tried, by a thousand other demonstrations of anger and vengeance, to intimidate her into submission. But finding her unshaken in her resolution, he formed a plan for gratifying his brutal desires without any apparent violence on his part; making use of a truly diabolical stratagem.

"After working upon the feelings of my poor daughter by every threat he could think of, he

suddenly stopped, and covering his face with his hands, remained some time in that reflecting attitude. Then, as if repenting of his outrageous conduct, he exclaimed—‘ Yes, I was wrong, I confess it: I am a barbarian, a savage, a monster.—Oh, beautiful Dorotea! pardon me—Here at thy feet I will remain on my knees until I obtain pardon for my impious wishes !’

“ Dorotea, astonished at this change, showed her surprise ; but Dunier taking her hand, said he would not rise unless he first received her pardon ; assuring her she should no longer hear him utter those execrable words, and that henceforth he would be dependant only on her will.—‘ Say only,’ added he earnestly, ‘ that you forgive me.’

“ ‘ *I forgive you!*—oh, rather forgive my unhappy brother,’ cried the weeping Dorotea.

“ ‘ Yes, but I must first obtain your pardon ; this will be the prelude to all the favours you may wish to demand. I will make you my wife ; you shall be my sweet, my tender wife.’

“ ‘Heavens!’ exclaimed she, ‘what do you say?’

“ What you have just heard—Colonel Dunier shall be your devoted husband, and here on my knees I ask, lovely Dorotea, your consent; I cannot in any other manner atone for the violence, the brutality, with which I solicited from a virtuous maid favours granted only to Hymen. Oh, Dorotea! how deep is my remorse!—This moment, however, will I repair my fault. Name any clergyman to unite us. I am, like yourself, a Catholic, and ’tis in the bosom of our mother Church that I would legitimate my wishes.’

“ The innocent Dorotea, deceived by the submissive and ardent demonstrations of the traitor Dunier, did no longer doubt of his entire change; yet, she could not help exclaiming,—
‘How can you be my husband, when you are the declared enemy of my unhappy countrymen?’

“ ‘It is true,’ replied he, ‘that till now I have been a cruel enemy, but henceforth you will

find me the best of friends. I will give you such convincing proofs of my love as will entirely remove every suspicion from your mind. This very day I join the Spanish troops, and thus shall I remain for ever attached to the soil that saw Dorotea's birth.'

" 'Alas! Sir,' exclaimed she, 'it is not possible. My faith is given to another, and I could not break through it. He would despise me; I could never forgive myself.'"

" 'And who is he?' enquired Dunier.

" 'It is,' said the unsuspecting Dorotea, 'Don Raymundo Lara, the officer whom you have brought along with my brother.'

" 'Dunier lowered his brows, and was silent for one or two minutes. At last, 'Well!' exclaimed he, 'you are a simple thing, to believe he cares for you! If I took him prisoner, it was owing only to my surprising him in the church of the neighbouring village in the act of receiving the matrimonial benediction from the cler-

gyman of the place. Otherwise I might have hunted him to all eternity before I could have succeeded in making him prisoner.'

" ' Gracious heaven !' exclaimed Dorotea, ' what do I hear ? This was only wanting to complete my misery ! Raymundo faithless to me !—no, 'tis not possible.'

" Dunier carried his hand to his forehead, and then said—' What ! do you doubt the truth of what I say ?—If you do, I can soon satisfy you. You shall see his wife, who in spite of my soldier's rebukes would follow him, and who is now in an adjoining room. I will go myself to her, and bring her to you.'

" Saying this, he went out of the room, leaving the unhappy Dorotea drowned in tears. On his return to it, he said, ' Raymundo's wife is praying, and I would not disturb her ; but you can see her through this glass door.'—Then taking Dorotea to the door, he drew aside a little of the curtain, and showed her a woman

who was kneeling, her hands raised to heaven, and muttering Raymundo's name with the word 'husband.'

"She was one of those infamous women, who had prostituted her honor to one of the French officers in Dunier's division, and whom he instructed in the part she was to perform.—'Can you doubt it now?' asked he.

"Dorotea sunk back on a chair, exclaiming,—'Who could have believed it?'

"'He is a worthless wretch,' said Dunier: 'let us save your brother, and think no more of Raymundo. He deserves the death that awaits him.'

"'Oh, no!' cried she, 'save him too. Let me meet his unkindness by a service. Let him owe me his life, that he may enjoy happiness with another, since heaven has disposed it to be not with the unfortunate Dorotea!'

"'Generous creature!—you will melt my heart!' said Dunier kneeling and respectfully kissing her hand.—'But my sweet love, we have

no time to lose. Let us be united ; I will then restore your brother to freedom, and also that faithless friend, who has sacrificed you to another ; then will I add my arm to theirs, and fight for the “ *Justa Causa.*”^a

“ Dorotea stood trembling and silent. Such an union was the abhorrence of her soul ; but there was no other means to save her beloved brother, and she requested amidst sighs and sobs to be allowed to send Cecilia, the maid servant, who was in the room, to inform us of it, and ask our consent.

“ ‘ No, no,’ cried he, ‘ my impatience can bear no delay ; besides, their joy will be greater when they are so agreeably surprised. It will be to them like a new life !—What rapture for your brother, and for your friend too, to see themselves suddenly restored to life, liberty, and their country ! I myself am transported ! I must send my servant to arrange every thing for the ceremony.’

^a The cause of justice.

“ Saying this he left the room, and my innocent and credulous daughter remained astonished and confused, struggling between the joy of her beloved brother’s prompt deliverance, and the thrilling horror of a marriage like the one proposed to her.

“ After a quarter of an hour’s absence, Dunier returned, followed by several of the officers of the regiment, and by a priest, dressed in clerical habits, who was the same they had brought along with Manuel and Raymundo, and to whom he promised his liberty if he would officiate on this occasion.

“ The innocent victim on seeing them appear began to tremble: but still more when the fatal question,—‘ Will you have him for your husband?’—was put to her. She was mute and ready to faint; but the impatient Dunier whispered in her ear, ‘ Your brother Manuel’s life.’

“ ‘ Yes, I will,’ ejaculated the unhappy Dorothea, bursting into a flood of tears.

“ ‘ My happiness is complete,’ cried the bar-

barous Frenchman ; and soon after the marriage ceremony was concluded !

“ It was towards night when this infernal drama ended. The priest having withdrawn immediately after, the officers and their chief remained with Dorotea, and the supper being served up, they all sat down to table. My poor daughter, who did not see any thing of her brother or of any one of her family, burst into tears, and demanded them aloud. Dunier, to quiet her fears, told her in a whisper, that she could not see them yet, because it was necessary to be cautious, lest the officers might suspect his designs and destroy them all ; but that early in the morning of the next day, they would both join her family, and brother.

“ The supper concluded, the officers withdrew, and two French women, who officiated as servants to the Colonel, and as canteen-keepers to the regiment, entered the room, and took the weeping Dorotea to the fatal bed, notwithstanding the efforts which her bashfulness and chastity

opposed.—Alas! it was not enough for that ferocious monster to gratify all the caprices of his brutality Oh heavens! my heart bursts”

Here his sobs and tears impeded his utterance. Mine, too, flowed abundantly.—“Poor Doro-tea!” cried I, what a cruel trial must she have undergone!

“Oh, my child!” continued the afflicted father, “but you have only heard a part of his barbarities. How will you believe what follows?—Next day, after so basely abusing my unhappy daughter, who in the midst of her sufferings looked forward to the joy of seeing her brother and Raymundo at liberty,—the infernal Dunier, pretending to seize the first opportunity to escape, offered to accompany her to our house, assuring her he had already given the necessary orders for the deliverance of the prisoners. But before reaching the square of the town, he turned to her, saying,—‘Yesterday you dared to brave my anger; I could then have punished

you for your temerity, but I took compassion on your youth.—Now we are friends, let us see your brother and your lover !’ As he spoke, they reached the square, and he added, pointing forward, ‘ Do you know them ?’

“ God of Justice ! her brother hanging from a gallows between her lover and the priest who married her ! . . . ”

The unfortunate man could not proceed ; he clasped his head within his hands, and sighed so deeply, that he seemed to be in his last agonies. I myself was horror-struck, and unable to utter a word. After a few minutes silence, he continued—“ At the sudden impulse of her grief, Dorotea fell senseless on the ground, and her head striking against a stone, she was brought home in a pale disfigured state, streaming with blood, and apparently lifeless.

“ I was still confined to my bed, not having yet recovered from the relapse occasioned by my son’s arrival at Villa-Castin, when my unhappy daughter was brought in. But the afflicting

news was concealed from me, which there was no difficulty in doing, as I knew nothing of her absence. Her mother, however, who had spent the whole night in the most dreadful agonies, from not being able to learn any tidings of her child, was informed of her daughter's arrival; but seeing her stretched on a bed apparently lifeless, her face livid, and covered with blood, she fell on the floor in violent convulsions, and in a few minutes was no more!

“The lamentations of the horrified servants reached my ears. I called aloud to them, and receiving no answer, made an effort to rise from my bed, to see with my own eyes the cause of this confusion. I dragged myself to the door, and there found a servant weeping. I enquired the cause of his grief, and of the noise I had just heard. ‘Ah, Sir!’ cried he, ‘where are you going? Return to your bed, and I will endeavour to tell you all, if I am able to repeat the horrible relation.’

“The news of the sentence passed against my

son, had been a severe trial to me ; and I felt my heart sicken at hearing the catastrophe of my wife's death : but when I heard him relate part of Dunier's atrocious treatment of my daughter, as told them by Cecilia, my bitter grief was changed into rage.—I leapt from my bed, and drawing out from a closet a sword which I had concealed in it, made an effort to rush out of the house to avenge my violated child, but Domingo, detaining me,—‘ My master,’ said he, ‘ whither would you go ? Wait—for you know not yet the excess of your misfortunes.’

“ ‘ What !’ exclaimed I, ‘ are there still more thunderbolts to fall on my head !’

“ ‘ Your friend, your son, your daughter . . !’

“ ‘ What ! What !’

“ ‘ They are no more . . . !’ ”

As Ramirez spoke these last words a bitter smile played on his lip, and he shut his eyes in agony. I could not weep, my heart was so swelled with horror and indignation that it could

not relieve itself by womanish tears.—“ Ramirez,” cried I, unsheathing my sword, “ these on which we stand are Numantia’s ruins. Under them lies the dust of the heroes who sacrificed themselves for the liberty and independence of their country. By them I swear to avenge thy violated daughter, thy son, thy wife, and my own unhappy brother. To them I vow my blood till its last drop, my life till its latest breath. May the God of justice, who hears me now, direct my arm against the heart of the monster who committed such unheard-of atrocities.”

Ramirez gazed on me for some minutes, with a kind of bitter delight; then, bursting into tears, he threw his arms around my neck. I pressed him to my bosom, and tears rolled profusely down the cheeks of both. “ I feel,” said Ramirez, “ a secret satisfaction, which since my daughter’s death, I never yet have felt. By relating to you my misfortunes, I have lightened myself of a burden which pressed heavily on

my heart. The idea of meeting in thee a second avenger of my daughter's wrongs, inspires me with a consolation I had despaired ever to taste. 'Tis sweet to know, that if I fall in battle, I leave in thee another self, who will avenge my sacrificed family."

"I do again swear it on these glorious ruins, once the sanctuary of our independence," said I ; "but I trust that the God of battles will preserve your life to aid me in this pious work."

Saying this we parted, each to fulfil his duty.

CHAPTER IV.

Hark! here be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—

A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!

Lara.—BYRON.

OUR object being to force the French garrison of Soria to surrender, without exposing our troops to diminution by assaults or combats, we ordered all the peasants of those villages within six leagues around the city to withdraw with all their moveables to the mountains, or to more distant villages, that the French might find no provisions if they attempted a sortie. We then posted some of our men on the different roads to prevent provisions from being introduced into the city, and fell upon those parties that came out for the purpose of foraging.

The weakness of the garrison did not permit them to send large detachments of infantry to support their foragers, as they often felt it would have been expedient ; their number of horsemen also was so small, that they could not repulse us in these expeditions, and very seldom could they elude our vigilance.

When at night we approached the city, the dreary silence was only interrupted by the deep and lengthened call of “ Sentinelle—prenez garde à vous,”^a which went round the rampart like the sound of low thunder muttering along a defile of rocks, while the opposite heights faithfully re-echoed the sounds. In very dark nights, too, we were accustomed to listen towards the place whence the sound issued, and, with cautious steps approaching within musket shot, we fired at the sentinel on the rampart. Some of our soldiers were extremely dexterous and successful at this night shooting, which they used to call *bat shooting*.

Sentry, take heed.

Sometimes towards night we would assume a threatening attitude, and post ourselves in great numbers on the opposite heights. There we made large fires, and fired off before them, the drum beating all the while, as if we were engaged in important evolutions. The French imagined that the moment for assault was at hand, and getting all the garrison under arms, would remain all night up expecting our attack, while we went quietly to rest; our only aim being to weary their patience, and force them to surrender sooner.

Duran, who now commanded the division in which I served, marched with his troops to Arragon, leaving enough men behind to continue the blockade of Soria. The object of our expedition was to co-operate with Mina, who had passed the summer in the vicissitudes of good and adverse fortune.

Mina marched upon Agerve, with the intention of laying siege to that place. The Governor of Zaragosa, having been apprised of it,

sent a body of eleven hundred infantry and eighty cavalry to its succour. These were attacked by Mina, and though when obliged to retreat, they defended themselves with great gallantry, yet, owing to their forming into a hollow square, they were totally destroyed. Mina's troops made seven hundred prisoners, and the rest were killed, with the exception of three only, who made their escape to Zaragoza. In the meantime, the division to which I was attached laid siege to Calatayuz, and obtained possession of it, making the garrison prisoners.

After this success, our division made several marches and countermarches, during which we had several trifling engagements with the French, both in Arragon and in Castille, and then returned to Soria, to put an end to the siege, by compelling the garrison to surrender.

It was about this time that Mina obtained a brilliant success in an attack upon a strong escort of French infantry and cavalry, who were conducting twelve hundred Spanish prisoners to

France. These were all liberated, and a great booty made by his troops, with an inconsiderable loss on their part, while no more than half the French got back to Vittoria. Mina wishing to take the Spanish prisoners to Valencia, sent to us and to the Empecinado, to know whether we could co-operate with him by sending him some cavalry and the artillery we could spare, to protect them along the banks of the Ebro. Duran could not spare many of his troops, and artillery none, because we had only a few culverins, which were then employed in the siege of Soria, and the Empecinado, having met with some reverses about this time and lost his artillery, could not join him. Sixty dragoons were all the cavalry Duran could send, whom he placed under my command. Ramirez, who held the rank of Lieutenant, accompanied me in this expedition, and we proceeded towards Estela, the place near which we expected to meet Mina. We were, however, disappointed, for he had been obliged to double his marches in order to

avoid some French troops, who had been sent against him to prevent his passing the Ebro with the prisoners, and whose vigilance he succeeded in eluding.

In that expedition, however, I had the pleasure of visiting the hospital which he had near Estela, close upon the declivity of a mountain, in a most delightful situation, and where his men were extremely well attended by several women, and a few skilful surgeons. The French had made many attempts to surprise it; but Mina, who had as fine a plan of espionage as ever Napoleon himself had, was sure to get information, and, upon the first notice, all the inhabitants of the village carried upon biers on their shoulders the sick and wounded some leagues into the mountains, where they remained in perfect security until the French retired. In this mountain retreat he had also established a gunpowder manufactory, which supplied him plentifully with this most necessary article of war.

On the return to our division, we met near Arnedo Mina's Captain of cavalry, Dos Pelos, who informed us of Mina's success in fording the Ebro with the liberated prisoners. This man was a most intrepid warrior, and generally commanded the advanced guard. His men were all distinguished for their bravery. They were dressed like hussars, with jackets and blue pantaloons; having caps like the rest of Mina's troops, but with the addition of about half a yard of red cloth hanging from them, and falling over the shoulders of the wearers. They all wore sandals and spurs, the more easily to escape if they happened to be dismounted, by climbing up the sides of the mountains.

In parting from them, we took the road to Proveda, which town we entered at night. The deepest silence reigned every where. We knocked loudly at several doors, but no one answered, the town seemed perfectly deserted. My soldiers got hold of some resinous wood, which

served us as torches, and we proceeded along the streets. In passing through a retired part of the town, we suddenly heard groans and doleful cries issuing from a chapel. I alighted from my horse, and, looking through the key hole, by the feeble rays of the sacred lamp which was burning close to the altar, I could distinguish a multitude of persons on their knees, and a priest standing in the middle of them. I gave a loud knock, calling to them not to be alarmed, for that we were Spaniards; but at this moment, the cry of consternation was so general, and the noise and confusion so great, that it was impossible to make them hear. At length, after our repeating several times that we were not Frenchmen, they ventured to open the doors, and old men, women, and children, all rushed out like people just escaping from a conflagration, with wild looks, in which the pleasure of their safety was hardly yet observable. Some threw their arms around my neck; others cried and laugh-

ed at the same moment; the children jumped about, and shewed their joy by loud and long cheerings of "*Vivan los nuestros.*"^a

Their distress had been occasioned by a French flying column, which having arrived in the afternoon in the town to raise a contribution on its inhabitants, had threatened to put them all to the sword if they did not pay it within a given time. Many of the inhabitants, knowing their inability, had taken to flight, and others had sought refuge in their chapel, where they nevertheless were expecting every moment to be put to death, imagining the French still in the town.

This flying column had taken the road to Almazan. We also took that road, persuaded that our division could not be many days march from that place. On the following day, we came up with the rear of the French division, and kept hanging on it for two days, availing ourselves of every favourable oppor-

* Long live our countrymen

tunity of destroying as many French as we could.

On the morning of the third day, I attacked a small party of infantry, who had rambled from the main body ; but while we were engaged with them, an enemy's detachment of light cavalry descended rapidly from the mountains ; and seeing myself surrounded, I ordered my men to disperse, appointing the place where we were to meet. I then set off at full gallop. After passing through several cross roads, suddenly my horse startled, and some children ran out from a thicket, screaming with terror. I overtook them, and having quieted their fears, desired them to take me to their house ; for I was very hungry, and my horse very tired. They told me that for five months they had been living in a retired spot by the river-side, whither they would take me. I followed them, and we soon arrived at a delightful spot, perfectly inclosed within a parapet of rocks, which formed a circus of about three quarters of a league,

having the rapid waters of the Duero on one side. With great difficulty I led my horse along those precipices; but having at last reached the place without any accident, I saw myself in an encampment of women and children, the only man who was with them being a venerable aged ecclesiastic. These people had sheep and swine, fowls and turkeys, all living together in the same huts, which they had constructed for themselves. Here at least they had peace, if they had not many comforts. I remained one day in this place, endeavouring to repair a little the weak condition to which my fatigues had reduced me; and also that of my companion, who was as much in need of rest and refreshment as myself.

This horse was the one I had had ever since I left home. He was a proud and spirited Andalusian; but very gentle, docile, and sensible to caresses. If, when fatigue had exhausted his strength, I patted and encouraged him, he seemed to recover his lost vigour, and would

make exertions that no blows could ever extort from him. He loved the sound of the trumpet, and would prance with proud delight when he saw himself decorated with ribbons and trappings. Sometimes, when, during a long march, I grew sleepy, he would gently slacken his pace, and adapt it so as to assist in keeping me on the saddle. And I was not insensible of his worth ; for often did I march on foot a whole day, and go without my own bread to feed him.

Having left this retreat with some regret, I went to the appointed place, where I had the pleasure of meeting Ramirez with all our men, who were anxiously waiting for me, afraid that some serious accident had been the cause of my delay.

The French division had by this time entered Soria ; and Duran, finding himself too weak to contend with an enemy five or six thousand strong, had retired to the mountains in the direction of Gomara. We now kept in the immediate vicinity of Numantia, until the French

evacuated Soria, which they did two days afterwards. They carried away with them the garrison, which had already consumed all the provisions and ammunition in the town.

On entering the town an hour after the French left it, we were received with open arms by the few poor starved inhabitants who had been shut up in it during the blockade. We immediately re-organized the civil authorities in the name of Ferdinand VII., as we had done in other instances, and as was always our practice, whenever the French abandoned any city, whether they might come back or not; and on the following day we continued our march behind the French troops who had taken the road to Agreda, and who suffered very much through want of provisions, and particularly of water, for the inhabitants of the villages on the road had thrown dung, dead horses, and all sorts of filth into all the ponds and wells on the road. We kept hovering on the rear of this division till they reached Agreda, the last city of Castille,

on the boundaries of Arragon and Navarre ; where Darquier halted with his troops without its walls.

This was the place that had given birth to my Isabella. What a crowd of tumultuous feelings rushed upon me, when, from the steepy heights of the Moncayo, (a mountain from which the family of the Marquis took their name,) I saw fair Agreda below me, with its shady walks, orchards, and shrubberies, and beyond it a beautiful, picturesque, and fertile country, rendered doubly delightful from the contrast with the barren and rocky Sierras extending beyond Soria, which we had just passed ! — But it was not the difference of landscape that chiefly engrossed my thoughts. — Agreda was, as I have said, the birth-place of my Isabella. Could I have hoped to find her there, and find her too unchanged, and the reports that had reached me false, with what rapture should I have gazed on that spot ! Even as it was, uncertain of her constancy, and separated for two years, the view

of those places where she had passed the innocent and happy days of her childhood, raised a tumult of emotions in my bosom. I asked myself a thousand questions. Where was she? Had she escaped the dangers to which her youth and beauty exposed her—from the immoral and profaning French?—Good God! if she should have fallen a victim to their barbarous cruelty! The idea thrilled me with horror. I could not bear to dwell on it. But even if I were spared that misery—if she were yet alive, could I hope she still loved me? Some happier lover, who could at least claim a name and a family, had perhaps driven the poor foundling from her thoughts. This was most likely to be the case, or I should have heard from her in some way before this.

I was indulging in these melancholy musings, when a volley of musquetry from the valley below roused me from my reverie, and called back my thoughts to different objects. I dispatched two of my men down the mountain to learn the cause, and shortly after a peasant ran

up to us with wild looks of horror and affright, and informed us it was occasioned by a bloody sacrifice just made by General Darquier, who commanded the French troops.

That barbarous Frenchman, while halting with his men without the town, had dispatched an order to the inhabitants to send him ten thousand rations of bread, meat, and wine, with a contribution of half a million of francs, within the exact time of an hour and a half, threatening to shoot the four principal personages of the town, and to pillage and demolish their houses if his demands were not complied with within that time.

Unfortunately for the wretched inhabitants, another column of French troops had been there only the day before, and levied a similar contribution; so that it was absolutely impossible for them to obey his commands within the given time. This they represented to him; but his only answer was, to order the four principal persons to be seized and brought into his pre-

sence, and then to repeat the threat. Three of these gentlemen were noblemen, and the fourth was one of the richest men in the province. The inhabitants by incredible exertions had nearly completed the contributions within the given time, (two thousand rations of meat being only wanting,) when this blood-thirsty monster, who could not be in need of those rations, his division consisting only of four or five thousand men, ordered his unhappy victims to be shot, and their houses pillaged and demolished! He had sent an officer, and some soldiers to execute this part of the sentence, while he was preparing to march with the remainder of his troops to Logroño.

I enquired eagerly of the peasant who were the unfortunate men thus sacrificed; but he had not learned the name of any one of them.

Resolving to appease with the blood of the few executioners who had been sent to pillage the houses, the manes of the unhappy men who had been so inhumanly butchered, we hastened

towards the town. On our arrival the detachment was just entering one of the houses, and the pillage had begun. We all dismounted, and, sabre in hand, rushed into the house. The French seeing themselves suddenly attacked, were obliged to defend themselves. Surprised, and uncertain of our number, they began to yield ; but while we were pursuing them through the lower part of the house, notwithstanding the noise and confusion, I thought I heard stifled screams. In a moment they were repeated more violently ; it was a woman's voice, and seemed to come from some room above. Making my way up the staircase, I burst into the room from whence they issued, and saw a young female struggling violently to escape from the arms of the French Colonel. On perceiving me, the villain loosed his victim, who fell lifeless on the ground ; and springing towards me, he attacked me furiously. After a violent contest for some minutes, a blow of my sabre laid him prostrate at my feet.

I now turned to the unfortunate girl who was extended on the ground without the least sign of life. In her fall, she had struck her head against a chair, and the blood still flowing profusely from the wound, she was nearly covered with it. Her clothes were torn, her hair dishevelled, her features quite distorted with terror and the exertions she had made, and her face overspread with the paleness of death. Tying my handkerchief tightly round her temples to stop the bleeding for the present, I rushed down stairs to join my men who were still fighting in the yard. Here, in the heat of the contest, a severe wound on the head brought me senseless to the ground; but, on recovering, I found we were complete masters of the field. Only two or three of the French had saved themselves by flight; the rest had expiated the barbarity of their leader on the spot.

Hastily stepping over the dead and wounded that were lying around me, I returned to the room where I had left the unhappy lady. On

entering it, Ramirez ran to me with open arms, and throwing them round my neck, exclaimed, “We are avenged!—The villain is no more!—There lies the monster Dunier drenched in his own foul blood.—Barbarous wretch!—’twas he who nipped in the bud those sweet flowers, the delight of my life! At one blow he cut off wife, children, all, all my happiness for ever! I swear,” added he, dipping his sabre in the blood, as if to seal his oath, “this sword shall never spare a Frenchman while there is one left in this miserable land.—Countrymen! have ye not wrongs to avenge? Will ye not swear with me—extermination to the race?”

His look and action electrified every one.—All caught his enthusiasm, and drawing their sabres, shouted—“Death to the French!”—When the enthusiasm of the moment had a little subsided, we turned our attention to the unfortunate female, who was still lying senseless on the floor, and from whose face some of the soldiers had already wiped the blood. To my

eager enquiries whether she was dead or alive, one of them said he thought the lady alive ; for he could feel her heart beating. I soon verified this, and ordered one of them to run for a doctor. But he observed, it would be more prudent to take ourselves off without losing a minute : for though no enemies now remained in the house alive, it would not be long before we should probably encounter the whole division, if the two or three Frenchmen who had made their escape should succeed in joining it. This was not unlikely, as the severest retaliation would be exacted by General Darquier. Yet what was to be done with the unfortunate lady who was lying senseless before us ? I could not think of leaving her there to perish for want of assistance, and perhaps be exposed to new horrors, should the French return before us. Therefore, I resolved to take her with us, and leave her at the first place of safety till she could be restored to her friends.

Having quickly traversed the town, we di-

rected our steps towards the Peak of Moncayo, and soon found ourselves at some distance from the scene of horror. From this eminence I observed the division of General Darquier disappear altogether, which circumstance made me conclude that they had not yet missed the officer and soldiers. Meanwhile the unfortunate girl, who had been placed on the horse before me, was gradually coming to herself, and having now arrived at a little hamlet, situated in a valley on the other side of the mountains, I alighted, and caused my fainting charge to be taken into a house, the good hostess of which was so terrified at seeing a young female besprinkled all over with blood, her dress torn, and her countenance pale and disfigured, that she herself fell senseless on the ground. The house, however, was soon filled with all the inhabitants of the hamlet, who gave us every kind of assistance.

Though impatient to proceed, I could not resist waiting a few minutes to see if the young lady recovered herself entirely. For some time

she only sunk from one fainting fit into another. I began to fear she would expire in my arms; but having at last succeeded in making her swallow a little wine, she opened her eyes, and eagerly looking around, asked with a feeble voice where she was. I assured her she was with none but friends; at the sound of my voice, she suddenly turned herself towards me, and fixing her eyes on my military coat, sprang from me, uttering a loud shriek; and, throwing herself at the feet of some women, implored their protection. In vain I assured her that the barbarian she took me for was dead; and that I was her deliverer. She did not even hear me, but, clinging to the women, wildly entreated them not to leave her. Seeing that my presence only increased her agitation, I left her to their care, earnestly recommending them to give her every assistance, and promising they should be amply repaid for their kindness.

I then assembled my men, who were reduced to fifty, six of whom I knew had fallen; but

the fate of the remaining four was not known. Of the fifty left many had been badly wounded, and for my own part, I began soon to perceive that I had neglected myself too long. I had received two severe wounds; and now, weakened by the loss of blood, and by fatigue, I could scarcely give the necessary orders to my little troop; I therefore intrusted the command of it to Ramirez, and remained with my servant Anton, to have my wounds dressed. But my strength soon abandoned me altogether, my head turned giddy, and I became quite unconscious of all that was passing about me.

CHAPTER V.

Trust not those cunning waters of his eyes,
For villainy is not without such rheum ;
And he, long traded in it, makes it seem
Like rivers of remorse and innocency.

SHAKESPEAR.

How long I remained insensible I do not know: I remember being conscious for a few minutes that I was lying on some straw in a cottage, and suffering acute pain, but from that time I have no recollection of any thing, till I found myself gently waking from a refreshing sleep, and quite free from pain, though in a state of extreme weakness. On looking around I saw that I was in a rich bed, and a female form bending over it, anxiously watching me.

The room was too dark for me to distinguish any thing more than that her countenance was extremely pale and melancholy, but pleasing and animated by fine dark eyes. She was in deep mourning, and a profusion of dark tresses fell in ringlets over her shoulders. As soon as she saw I was awake, she beckoned to some one, and an elderly man advanced and felt my pulse. I heard him whisper to her that I was quite out of danger. At these words she clasped her hands as in an ecstasy of joy, exclaiming fervently, and in a low voice, "Thank God!" Then, as if fearing her emotion might disturb me, she gently drew the curtains, and left the room.

In a short time she returned with a servant bringing a cup of chocolate and a glass of water, which she pressed me to take. I made an effort to speak, but I was only able to ask, to whom I was indebted for so much kindness. "You are n Agreda," replied she with a voice that penetrated into my soul; "with friends

who love you, and who can never repay the services you have rendered them ; but I must not speak long to you in your present state of health ; I am forbidden to do it ; quiet is necessary for your recovery ; let us think only of that."

Unable to answer, I stretched my hand to her, which she caught, and I pressed hers against my lips. These few words, and the emotion with which they were spoken, had explained everything to me. My fair nurse was the lady whom I had saved, though I endeavoured in vain to trace any resemblance between the disfigured form I had carried from Agreda, and the beautiful figure that now stood before me. The expressions of gratitude, however, that involuntarily burst from her lips, her anxious solicitude, and the unremitting care she took of me, would not have allowed me long to remain in doubt.

The confinement and fatigue she imposed on herself, made me apprehensive, lest they might be beyond her strength to bear ; but she assured me repeatedly, she was now quite reco-

vered, and entreated to be allowed to attend me as long as any attendance was necessary. Must I own it? her attentions were become too pleasing to me to be refused. Had I then forgotten Isabella? no, but she had most probably forgotten me. Her silence, and the reports that had reached me, were almost proofs that she no longer loved me, or at least had yielded to the circumstances in which she was placed. Yet, though I could hardly hope she returned my affection, she was still very dear to me, and almost always present to my thoughts. Sometimes I would review the obstacles that opposed our union, and scarcely blame her inconstancy. Then the recollection of the happy hours we had passed together, the sweet hopes I had once entertained, would draw bitter tears from my eyes. Even the graces of this lovely stranger, her gentle attentions, the touching sound of her voice, charmed me most, when they most reminded me of Isabella.

In a word, my heart was opening to the

sweets of a new passion for a being as lovely as she was kind and amiable; but regrets for what seemed lost to me still clung round it, and so strong was still my prepossession for Isabella, that I dared not declare it to this new and interesting object. The agitation I felt in the weak state in which I then was, threw me back into a fever, and I was delirious for several hours. In these moments, when man yields to nature, I declared (as I was afterwards informed) my passion for her, in such extravagant terms, that none of those who visited me could be ignorant of the real cause of this relapse.

When, by their cares, I was brought to a more calm state, I looked in vain around me for my adored charmer. I asked eagerly where she was; they answered me that she was gone out of town. "And has she too left me!" thought I; "Oh Isabella! if you should still love me, I have deserved this."

Soon, however, the door flew open, and I saw my guardian angel enter. I made a violent

effort to raise myself, but fell back on my pillow ; and as she ran to me and supported me, the pleasure of seeing her almost deprived me of consciousness, and for some moments I was unable to speak. I now knew I had declared my passion too plainly to try to make a secret any longer of what had so much pressed upon my heart. As soon, therefore, as I was able, I began gently reproving her for leaving me when her presence was so necessary to me. She returned me no answer ; but drawing away the bed curtains and opening the blinds, that had till then darkened the room, discovered to me—— Was it possible !—could the dignified form that stood before me be my sprightly Isabella ? These were indeed the same exquisitely beautiful features, but the playful smiles that used to animate them, and sparkle in her fine dark eyes, had given place to an expression of deep melancholy ; and instead of the warm glow of youth and health, she was pale and colourless as marble. Two years at her age could not

have produced such a change. Grief and suffering must have had their share. While surprise and doubt kept me in silence, "Esteban," said she, in a grave tone, and her eyes filled with tears, "have you quite forgotten me?"

The tone in which that name was spoken could not be mistaken,—the too fascinating stranger, and my lovely Isabella, were one and the same,—overpowered with a thousand various emotions, I sunk back, my eyes fixed on the form I could scarcely believe was really before me.

Alarmed at my violent agitation, she hung over me, and by the tenderest caresses, the most endearing expressions, recalled me to myself. "My own Isabella," exclaimed I, catching her in my arms, "is it indeed you, and are you really mine? Do you still love me?"

"Take care, Esteban," replied she, "what questions you ask. What if I should ask the like in return?"

"Ask what you will, reproach me as you

will ; but give me once the assurance that you still love me."

"I am afraid," replied she, blushing, "it will be of little use now to deny that ; but you deserve no such confession ; and now," continued she, while one of her former smiles faintly played over her features, "since I may reproach you, what apology can you offer for the speech you made just now, to one you then thought a stranger?"

"None, none. I throw myself on your generosity, only let me say that I heard from good authority you were listening favourably to the vows of another. Even that resemblance to you that first struck me, would not have charmed me, had I not thought you had long ago forgotten me."

"Forgotten you, Esteban ! I have never before or since we parted given you any reason to think me fickle. You might have had more confidence in me."

"Dearest Isabella, it was less from want of

confidence in you than in myself. It seemed presumption to hope you should slight every attention for the sake of one whom you had discovered to be only a foundling without a name."

"You were still the same to me, and to my dear uncle, too. Ah! if he were but here!"

"Where is he then?" cried I anxiously.

She reclined her head against my shoulders, and I felt her tears moisten my neck.

"I see it, Isabella! he was one of the victims of the sanguinary Darquier! God of Justice! another spirit to avenge!"

"Another spirit to avenge!" exclaimed she, looking earnestly at me.

"Yes, to avenge! Raymundo is no more! He also fell a victim to French cruelty. But neither does the villain by whose orders he fell any longer exist. My sword has rid the world of that monster."

"Poor Raymundo!" exclaimed Isabella. "Oh, when will our troubles end!"

“ When all that low-born race of slaves, who desolate our country, share the fate of their sacrificed victims. But say, is our beloved Marquis indeed no more ?”

“ I fear there is no hope. He was taken to the place of execution with the rest of the unfortunate men who were shot, and although it is true the bodies of three only were found, we have heard nothing of him since.”

“ We can hope nothing from those monsters ; it is most likely they carried him away, only to give him a more cruel, a more ignominious death.”

“ I shall never, never see him again,” she exclaimed in an agony of grief.

“ Dear Isabella,” said I, moved to tears at her distress, “ had they meant to execute him, they would have done so instantly ; it is more probable they have carried him with them as a prisoner.”

A ray of hope beamed on her countenance. “ Do you really think so ?” said she, pressing my hand in hers.

At this moment a great noise was heard in the *patio*,^a and Isabella was called out. She left me, and desired Anton to call her should her presence be wanted.

“My master,” said Anton to me, when she was gone; “if I am not mistaken, this is the same young lady, niece of that Marquis, whom I, or rather our mules, took to Madrid from Valladolid. What strange events come to pass in this queer world! When she went over Somosierra, sighing and sobbing for you, she little imagined that one day you would come to Agreda, to snatch her from the grasp of that villain, whom you sent to Satan, to be his Major General, in promotion of his Colonelship; and that that same villain was the one who butchered your brother, and who moreover was very near blocking up bread lane,^b

^a The court of a house.

^b He means his wind-pipe, a manner of expressing hanging, very common among this sort of people.

in my throat, when on the 2nd of May, I ran about Madrid dispatching *gabachos* with my stiletto."

"Why, Anton, you never before told me you had been present at that affair."

"It is," said he, "that my modesty will never let me speak about myself; yet, on that occasion, Velarde and Daoiz excepted, I was the one who killed the most Frenchmen. To be sure I was near paying dearly for it; for I was at last caught, cord-bound, and sent to the Prado. That was a dreadful night! Ten thousand men of the enemy were drawn up along those dark avenues, where I had often twanged my guitar, in the fresh evening breeze, seated on the grass beside one of those soul-robbing Manolas; but where the remnant of my body would now have been employed in making bricks, had I not contrived to unbind myself, and creep under between the legs of a whole regiment of French, crying, "*Camarade ah! je suis blessé*," which I had learned from those I

had stuck my poniard into, and guessed pretty well its meaning. Fortunately the night was dark, and a few torches only lighted that scene of horror, where more than four hundred unfortunate fellow countrymen received their death on their knees in cold blood. But on the next day, I was found under a blacksmith's bench by the villain you killed, who insisted on having me hanged, although I strenuously objected to such an operation. But when his men were on the point of taking hold of me to carry me to the Plazuela de la Cebada, the trumpets sounded and drums beat to arms, and they all began running as if the devil was behind them. The Colonel, however, made a thrust at me with his sword, which I avoided by bending down, crying out, "Ah ! I am dead."

"Did the French, who escaped from our attack on the day of our arrival here, succeed in reaching the division?" enquired I; "and were those of our men who were missing found?"

"By St. John," cried he, "the inhabitants of

Agreda were not likely to let those few French pass through the town without returning their kindness. They fell on them, and allowed none to escape to tell what they had seen. As for those four men who were missing, they all came back shortly after, and proceeded immediately to join Lieutenant Ramirez, according to your orders; but we have still ten in the hospital here, badly wounded."

Isabella now returned, and as soon as we were alone—"I do not know," said she, "whether I ought to rejoice, or be afflicted at the news I bring. The noise you heard a little while ago, was caused by the arrival of Don Facundo. The news of my uncle's death has reached him, I know not how:—he is come to take possession of the title and estates of Moncayo. He seems overwhelmed with grief; but his conduct has been so equivocal, I cannot give him credit for sincerity in any thing. You know that he accompanied Ferdinand to Bayonne. There he espoused the cause of the French, and on his

return to Madrid with King Joseph, was created Count and Grand Chamberlain for the services he had rendered him. While holding these offices, he wrote several letters to the Marquis to persuade him to come over to his party ; but on the flight of Joseph to Valencia, he abandoned him, and now he declares that his services to the French were all extorted from him by threats and open violence. After such a conduct, how can I believe him sincere ? Still, he says, he comes to serve me as a father, and comfort me in my forlorn situation. I wish I could trust his words, and find him such as my heart desires ; though he could never replace the loss of my dear uncle.—However,” added she, “ he says he wishes most ardently to embrace his niece's deliverer, and the avenger of his brother ; but before I introduced him to you, I wished to know if it would be agreeable to you.”

“ Isabella,” said I, “ I would much sooner embrace the monster Darquier than Don Facundo. From the former we could expect

nothing but the violence of an outrageous enemy, but from this man we had a right to expect a different conduct. To tell you the truth, I cannot remain under the same roof with a man who has shown himself such a traitor to his country. Anton shall convey me to the hospital."

"To the hospital !" interrupted she, her cheeks growing still paler, and her eyes filling with tears.

"Why are you so alarmed, my love? I should be well attended, and it is so near, I could be moved without danger."

"Don't, pray don't talk so ; you are not yet in a state to be moved any where. Besides, after the message I bring, that would certainly offend Don Facundo——"

"Don't name the traitor."

"Esteban," said she, "you surely forget that I am entirely dependent on him, and a quarrel between you might separate us, perhaps, for ever, or expose me to much unkindness. I entreat of

you to be more calm, if you would not make me quite miserable."

The tone in which she spoke touched me to the soul. Was I then so dear to her that the thought of a separation drew tears from her eyes? "Isabella," cried I, "I cannot bear those tears. What would you have me do?"

"Only receive this visit from Don Facundo. You will be troubled with him no more, for he goes away to-morrow. You can then, until you are quite recovered, stay here with my aunt, who will arrive in a few days. If Don Facundo still belonged to the French party, I would not ask this of you; but your remaining here can neither compromise your character, nor lay you under any obligations to him. I know how disagreeable it must be to you, but do you think it would be less painful to me to know you were left to the care of strangers, and I, perhaps, forbidden to see you? Dearest Esteban, pray do not make me so wretched; promise me you will see him."

I could not resist such entreaties, I even reproached myself for having refused so long, and it was agreed that the following day he should be introduced.

I had risen from my bed for the first time, and was sitting in an arm chair, when he entered. With an air of the greatest interest, he advanced eagerly, extending his arms to embrace me ; I drew back—did my eyes deceive me ? Was it possible, that Don Facundo could be the same person who had so earnestly urged my death when taken prisoner by the French ? “ I am impatient,” said he, in the most insinuating tone, and holding out his hand, “ to embrace my niece’s deliverer, and the avenger of my unhappy brother.”

His voice confirmed my suspicions ; for although I had only seen him in the evening, and in a different dress, and I might have been mistaken in his person, the tone of his voice, which was peculiar, had made too deep an impression on me to be forgotten, for its accents had been

heard in words urging my immediate execution !
“ I am happy,” said I, coldly, withdrawing my hand, “ to have had it in my power to serve such real friends as your brother and niece. For yourself, Don Facundo, you owe me no thanks; and excuse my hand, I have not forgotten the scene in the hamlet of Somosierra.”

“ Somosierra ! To whom am I speaking then ?”

“ To Don Esteban Lara, the son of that accursed race that must be exterminated !”

He was evidently mortified and surprised, but recovering himself with astonishing quickness, he exclaimed, apparently with the greatest delight, “ What ! the son of my best friend, safe and under my roof ? Thank God ! I only wish your dear father were here too ; excellent man ; he is one of my earliest friends, and I respect him the more for the services he rendered my unhappy brother.”

At these words he applied a handkerchief to his eyes. For me, I was struck dumb with

astonishment and indignation at his impudent hypocrisy. "Come," said he, after a moment's pause, "I see you, like several more of my friends, have been deceived by appearances, and thought me indifferent, perhaps treacherous, to my country, when, Heaven knows, I was making the greatest sacrifices to it ! I thank God for this opportunity of explaining to you, my dear young friend, (and through you to your excellent father, whom I esteem so highly,) those parts of my conduct which may have appeared equivocal."

He then went through a most elaborate defence of his public conduct, and particularly his behaviour to me at Somosierra, explaining it all with considerable address, and giving such plausible reasons, that a stranger would have thought him quite a martyr to his country.

I, however, who had been more behind the scenes than he was aware of, could hardly check my indignation, and once or twice was on the point of giving vent to it ; but the imploring

looks and death-like paleness of Isabella restrained me. If I had expressed my feelings, an open rupture must have been the consequence, which would have separated us, and given him an opportunity of making her life very miserable. On this account I determined to accept his excuses, and mustered self-command enough by the time he had finished, to make a civil reply to the protestations of friendship with which he concluded his sincere and candid explanation.

As soon as he was gone, "You have been obeyed," said I to Isabella; "but do not oppose my going any longer. You see what it has cost me to listen to that hypocrite, but I could not do it often; and you, my poor Isabella, must not be distressed by such scenes as these."

"You must not leave home," said she, anxiously: "Don Facundo leaves Agreda to-day. He is now setting out, and goes to a country house six leagues from town. His wife, from whom he has been separated a number of years,

and who is the kindest and best friend I have, is coming shortly to town, when I hope you will find things more agreeable."

In fact, that same evening, while I was engaged in reading an account of the battle of Salamanca, in a gazette that had been brought to me, Isabella entered, holding by the hand a pleasing looking middle aged lady, whom she introduced to me as her aunt. Doña Celestina, with much kindness, lamented that her absence from home had deprived her of the pleasure of waiting on me sooner. "We have," added she, "a long debt of gratitude to repay." She then urged my stay in terms that could not be resisted, when aided by the entreating looks of Isabella herself.

I now began to recover my strength rapidly, and in the course of ten days I was able to leave my room. As soon as I was well enough to join the family, the principal inhabitants of the town called upon me to express their acknowledgments for the service I had done them.

Among the people who came to visit me, was the widow of one of the unfortunate victims of General Darquier. She brought with her an only son, a fine little boy, to thank me for having avenged his father's death. At the recollection of her husband, to whom I understood she was devotedly attached, she was quite overcome; but recovering herself, she said, laying her hand on her son's head, "It must be my care to set the example of that father before his eyes; if he follows it, I may yet enjoy some happiness in this valley of tears." The dignified grief of this noble-minded woman was truly affecting; and all that I afterwards saw of her, confirmed the respect and esteem her first appearance inspired.

CHAPTER VI.

From house to house we rambled up and down,
To see, be seen, to tell and gather tales ;
Visits to every church we daily paid,
And march'd in every holy masquerade.

The Wife of Bath.—POPE, from Chaucer.

FOR six weeks I was confined to the house, the happiest of prisoners. After that I began to take short walks, attended by Isabella, who insisted on supporting me. What delightful walks were these, while, leaning on her arm, I listened to her conversation, at once so lively and so tender ! Soon, however, the intelligence of Don Facundo's return home in a few days threw a gloom over every countenance, and I determined, rather than see his face again, to leave the city, though I was very far from being

recovered, as the wound in my left arm was not yet healed. Under these circumstances, I accepted with pleasure the kind offer of Isabella's friend, the widow lady of whom I have already spoken, who, having learnt that I intended quitting the Marquis's, insisted on my making her house my home, till I was able to join the army.

Isabella's friend received me with the warmest expressions of pleasure; and as I knew they were the confidantes of each other, I did not hesitate to speak to her of my passion. She expressed her fear that my rupture with Don Facundo would have serious consequences; for she described him as a man of a most proud and revengeful disposition, and said that I had touched him to the quick by treating his pretensions with so much contempt. She was persuaded he would now oppose all our designs, and that we had much to apprehend from his machinations. She recommended, that while I

resided in Agreda, I should avoid meeting him; for, besides immoderate pride, he was full of hypocrisy, and, like all the Spanish nobles, united the utmost narrowness of mind, and want of candour, with inveterate hatred towards those to whom he was in any way indebted. He had also a son, who was the very image of his father, and who was in the army; but from him I had nothing to fear with respect to Isabella, for his father had engaged him to a lady of Agreda, who possessed a very large fortune. Their marriage had been deferred only in consequence of his being suddenly obliged to re-join his regiment.

In the house of this excellent lady and kind friend it was, that I had so many happy interviews with Isabella, every one of which tended more and more to prove the warmth and sincerity of her attachment to me.

As our manner of living *en famille* at Agreda was in the usual Spanish style, a description of

it may be not altogether uninteresting to such of my readers as are unacquainted with our domestic manners.

Between seven and eight in the morning, the servants enter our rooms, to draw aside the window curtains, and serve up chocolate to those who prefer taking it in bed; which is generally the case with the elderly people and the heads of families. In the same tray in which the chocolate is served to the gentlemen, there is generally a little silver plate, containing a live coal to light their cigars, which invariably follow the chocolate. This occupies the time till about eight, when they usually rise. Those who are religiously inclined proceed immediately to church, to hear mass, or to confess and take communion. On returning home, they take breakfast; which consists generally of some made dish, or eggs and ham, and sometimes a basin of *sopas de ajo*.^a

^a A soup made of a head of garlic, fried in some oil with a little pimento, the whole put into a pot of boiling water, and to which some salt is added.

The young ladies sometimes accompany their mammas to church of a morning ; but not usually, for it is only on Sunday that the omission would be an unpardonable sin. When they do not go to church in the company of their parents or brothers, they are followed by a servant, and are never seen out of doors by themselves. Those demoiselles who are not fond of long masses on a Sunday, go either very early, in a kind of deshabelle, their long hair floating on their shoulders, with a *basquiña*,^a a shawl, and a mantilla, in which they wrap their faces so completely that it is almost impossible to recognize them ; or they go to the mass, which in some of the churches is said at once, and which the priest gets through with such singular rapidity, that one cannot help remembering he has not yet breakfasted.^b

At this mass the ladies never fail to assist in

^a A black silk petticoat.

^b It is the practice with the Catholics to take communion before they break their fast.

their finest basquiñas, and lace veils. No shawl conceals the *negligé* of the stays ; at most a silk kerchief, gracefully pinned, hides from mortal view the charms beneath. But the waist is seen in all its diminutive dimensions ; leaving between it and the falling arms two neat apertures, notwithstanding the care that is taken to keep the elbows close to the body, and in a straight line with their hips ; a fashion, by the by, which I do not admire, though I grant it contributes to keep the chest elevated ; but it encroaches too much on our military style, and introduces a stiffness which is altogether inconsistent with feminine grace.

For strangers it must be a singular sight to see females of the above appearance, in the middle of a church, sitting squat on the unmatted floor, frequently of stone, and now turning themselves one way, now another, till they can find as convenient a posture as their cramped legs will admit. Not unfrequently, however, these perpetual motions have some other object

than that ; for few of them are so blinded by their devotion as not to see their admirers standing in the corners of the church, wrapt up in their cloaks, sending ardent looks to their Dulcineas, and smothering the sighs that, in spite of the sacredness of the place, rise rebelliously in their bosoms ! When the mass is over, these inamoratos repair to the *pila* or stone basin, in which the holy water is kept, to dip the two fore fingers of their right hand, and hold them out to their charmers, who touch them with theirs, accompanying the action with a curtsy and a look that goes near to blind their adorers for the rest of the day.

About noon, the ladies are *at home*, employed in their needle work, or some other occupation ; for I must do the Spanish ladies the justice to say, that though the gentlemen seldom set them the example, they are never idle ; for even when visiting their friends, they carry their work in their reticules. This being the time when they receive the morning calls of their acquaintances,

the gentlemen drop in to entertain the ladies with their conversation; often bringing those friends who have just arrived in town, and to whom the lady and gentleman of the house never fail to make an offer of it, and of every thing it contains. The facility with which a stranger gains admission into any house renders society the more varied, and manners the more open and lively. After such an offer as I have just alluded to, the party is accepted to go as often as he pleases.

The sound of the brass mortar in which the various herbs for the sauces, &c., are pounded, indicates that the dinner hour is fast approaching. The visitors then take their hats, and wish the ladies a good appetite. This happens, generally, at one, and in a few houses between two and three. Immediately after dinner, they all retire to their respective rooms, to take the *siesta*, or afternoon sleep—a custom I had not yet contracted, except in the most sultry days of summer, when the intensity of the heat pro-

duces a languor and a drowsiness which are irresistible.

In the afternoon, about sunset in the summer and at three in the winter, the ladies and gentlemen all repair either to the Alamedas, or shaded walks, generally by the side of the rivers; or to the Tapias, or walks along the city walls, that are sheltered from the cold winds, and enlivened by the sunshine; the choice of these depends on the particular season of the year. After the promenade, all retire to a *botilleria*^a to drink ices, or go home to take their chocolate; and in the evening they go either to the theatre or else to the tertulia.

Doña Lucia's tertulia was well chosen and free from restraint. Whatever agreeable society was in Agreda, was to be met with at her house; and just at that time there was more than usual in the town; for many families, who had quitted it, now returned, accompanied by others who

^a House where iced drinks are sold.

were on their way to their native places, their hopes raised by Marmont's retreat to Burgos. Our young visitors, who like all our countrywomen were not a little loquacious, occupied one end of the saloon, the admirers of some seated by their sides, or leaning upon the back of their chairs, whispering their tender complaints, or, if better pleased, fanning their favorites with their own fans.

Those young men who were skilled in playing the guitar, had usually around them two or three fair admirers, one of whom, it is always understood, is the constant theme of the song. The confusion of so many different sounds and voices, far from checking the general conversation, was rather a stimulus, and increased the clatter of tongues, and the hilarity of the company. A few young men, engaged, probably, in telling over some of their own gallantries, were seen here and there forming groups, while the middle aged and elderly people occupied their seats round a large table, where they sported

their money at the favorite game of *banco*. If there happened to be any young female among the number, she was invariably attended by her *cortejo*, who from behind handed the contents of his purse to share in her good or bad luck. Some also, without any love in the case, placed their money in the fair one's hands, on the presumption that fortune can never desert a handsome votaress.

As I detested cards, and was more interested in my own suit than in any thing else, I usually sat between my Isabella and Doña Lucia, conversing less noisily, but quite as agreeably as most of my neighbours; except when some game of forfeits obliged me to sit where chance cast me. I shall not attempt a description of the game of forfeits, which forms part of the amusements of the evening, because it would be an endless task, and because my reader would not be obliged to me for giving myself the trouble of describing such trifles, into which, however, every one of the party enters with all the spirit

and delight of a school boy. Dancing also forms a great portion of these evenings' amusements; the company being never at a loss for music, as there are always persons present who are able and willing to oblige the rest. There reigned, indeed, in those tertulias, an ease and a good humoured gaiety, as devoid of etiquette as the manners and conversation of the visitors.

As carriages are not very numerous in these small towns, the ladies, on their return from the tertulias, are always attended by a servant bearing either a large lantern or a lighted torch. The men are seldom attended by any one; which, however, is not without considerable risk.

Dining parties at home are not common in Spain, except on some great festival, such as the anniversary of the birth-day of the master, mistress, or even the children of the house; the promotion of some one of them to an official situation or preferment; a wedding day; a

son taking orders, or his obtaining a degree in the University ; a son or a daughter's return after a long absence, &c. But the *dias de campo*, or dining parties in the fields, which I have already described in the first volume of these memoirs, are more frequent.

During my residence at Doña Lucia's, the anniversary of her saint's day occurred ; on which occasion all her friends crowded in *para dar los dias*,^a and both her house and her own person were studiously decorated. The great drawing room was thrown open, and all the damask chairs and sofas were uncovered. She herself was seated under the image of the Virgin, (which hung over the large sofa in the middle of the room,) dressed in a beautiful white gown which she herself had embroidered ; a large bouquet of flowers with which I had presented her, pinned on her left side ; her head adorned

^a To compliment her by wishing her many happy returns, &c.

with the elegant *tembleque*;^a and in her hand the graceful fan—one of the most valuable articles of a Spanish lady's toilet.

Sweetmeats, liqueurs, generous wines, &c., were handed round to the visitors in superb salvers, which had been carefully concealed from our amiable foreign guests; who, being great amateurs of the arts, never neglected carrying away such valuable specimens of them. There was also a table furnished with pens, ink, and paper, and placed near the inner door, that the visitors might inscribe their names on the long sheet of paper, afterwards to be shewn as a trophy of that day's glory, and carefully deposited in the family archives, for the benefit of their progeny.

During the whole morning of this day, from eight till one, and even on the previous afternoon, there were sent numerous presents of sweetmeats and confectionary; which, however,

^a A diamond plume.

were not very profitable to the receiver,—since the servants who bring these gifts must all be recompensed for their trouble, according to their master's rank, and not to the value of the presents.

In the afternoon a grand dinner was given to a numerous party of Doña Lucia's friends ; and afterwards a magnificent refresco was served in a different apartment—where the ladies were arranged by themselves, like beautiful flowers in an English green house, the gentlemen standing up, or occupying an adjoining room. Ices were served first, and after a little interval, cakes and chocolate ; and finally, cold water by way of conclusion. As soon as the refresco ended, which was not very quickly, the servants retired, and, the music striking up, the dance began, and lasted till a late hour of the night.

CHAPTER VII.

But then I sigh, and, with a piece of Scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for evil;
And thus I clothe my naked villainy
With old odd ends, 'stolen forth of holy writ,
And seem a Saint, when most I play the devil.

Richard III.—SHAKSPEARE.

ONE day as I was sitting alone with Isabella at Doña Lucia's, listening to her charming voice, as she accompanied herself on the guitar, I entreated her to sing me the charming song:

¡ Vivir en cadenas
Que triste es vivir!
¡ Morir por la patria
Que dulce es morir !

“ On one condition I will,” replied she with a smile.

“It is granted,” cried I, “whatever it may be.”

“Are you so rash as to promise you know not what?”

“It is not rash to believe that you cannot ask me what I should not grant. But what is your request?”

“That you would tell me the history of your life, before I became acquainted with you.”

“I am afraid,” said I, “it would interest you but little, as I led much the same sort of life as all other Spanish boys.”

“But I want to hear something about that amiable priest, father Mantilla; about your trip to La Maruquesa; and other peculiarities of your infancy.”

I obeyed her wishes, and began as follows:—

During the first years of my infancy, my mother doubtless believing that she discovered in me an early inclination for the church, had me dressed in the costume of a cardinal, and Raymundo, who manifested a partiality for

every thing that was martial, in that of an officer of hussars.

It was not an uncommon thing to see Monsignor, dressed in his scarlet robes, with hat, pall, stockings, and shoes of the same colour, walking in the public promenades arm in arm with the dashing hussar, or romping with him till both were seen rolling together on the ground.

The custom of dressing children in this fanciful manner was more prevalent in those times than it is now. The generality of the boys arrayed in the different costumes, wore the habits of Franciscan friars, capuchins, dominicans, &c., except some sons of men of distinction, who were at once made bishops, cardinals, and even popes, while those of military men, and other gentlemen, paraded the public walks, dressed in their different regimentals, as much puffed up with their little importance as any of his Catholic Majesty's grown up officers.

Among the various honours which my car-

dinal's dress procured for me, that of assisting in the grand procession of the Corpus Christi, dressed as an angel, was not the least. On that pompous day, my long light auburn tresses (which were always carefully concealed while I was in my cardinal's dress, and which, had my mother adhered to a rigid etiquette, would have fallen under the merciless scissors,) were allowed to descend in their natural curls. A beautiful gold embroidered petticoat, reaching only to the knees, adorned my little body. A silk sash of a light blue colour, falling from the shoulder, and encircling my waist, floated lightly in the air. A pair of white silk embroidered shoes were tied with a coloured ribbon round my naked leg. On my head was a brilliant crown, set with all kinds of dazzling stones : and from my shoulders grew two enormous wings, made of the most beautiful feathers, which displayed all the colours of the rainbow.

Thus gaily arrayed, I was taken to the cathedral, from whence the procession was to issue

and placed with three other children, dressed in the same manner, on one of the corners of a most magnificent temple, in the midst of which was the host, on an elegant shrine of silver, beautifully wrought, encircled by jewels of the greatest brilliancy, surrounded by lighted tapers, and overhung with little silver bells, and flowery garlands. Among these fine jewels, however, I thought none more beautiful than my little self; which notion was, in fact, the only one capable of inspiring me with courage and patience to go through five long hours of kneeling, my little hands joined and raised as in the act of adoration, and as immoveable as a wax figure.

The procession, I remember, moved out of the Cathedral exactly at ten in the morning. It opened by a set of dancers arrayed in a dress not unlike my own; but not so splendid, and without wings. They went on performing a lively dance, rattling their castanets, and cutting capers to admiration. These dancers are gene-

rally boys of between ten and fourteen, belonging to the Cathedral, and who are to fill the inferior ecclesiastical offices of the church. They were followed by all the communities of friars whose convents were in Valladolid. These went one after the other in two lines, according to the established order of precedence. Next followed a long set of relics, contained in vases of gold and silver, of different shapes and sizes, belonging to the Cathedral ; each placed by itself on a small stage, carried by men concealed under the drapery, which hung from its sides to the ground. Afterwards followed the various brotherhoods with their different standards. Then the saints of the principal churches, accompanied by their respective curates, priests, and chaplains. After these went the body of prebendaries and canons, attended by their inferior ministers. Immediately after, followed the monument or silver temple already described ; it moved on wheels, but no one could perceive how, because the men were concealed under it.

Close behind the host came the bishop, surrounded by his ecclesiastical retinue, and the body of one of his chaplains completely enveloped in the train of his purple mantle. Then followed the *niños de coro*,^a accompanied by a full orchestra, singing hymns in Spanish ; and the procession closed by a body of military in their grand uniform, and an immense crowd of people.

The streets, through which the procession passed, were all strewed with sand, rushes, laurel leaves, and flowers. The houses were hung with white tapestry and silks of different colours, and the balconies with looking glasses, reflecting the light of innumerable tapers. The shops round *La Plaza Mayor*,^b and in several other streets, were fitted up like sacred grottos, each having its altar. Many elegant chapels were constructed in the middle of the streets. All the narrow lanes were concealed from the

^a Choristers.

^b The principal square.

view by green branches, and made to resemble groves hung with festoons of flowers.

As the host passed, the military, who lined both sides of the street, and the multitude that thronged both the pavement and the windows, fell prostrate in profound adoration ; and only rose when we were out of sight. For my part, I was in no small danger of being buried under the showers of flowers and beautiful nosegays that fell from the windows—"There go the pretty little dears,"—was the exclamation heard on all sides ; and immediately I felt my poor head assailed by a shower of roses, pinks, anemones, lilies, &c.

Both on the leaving and on the returning of the monument to the Cathedral, the bells announced its presence by loud peals, the military music mixed its inspiring notes with the voices of the singers who chaunted their hymns, clouds of incense involved the moving temple, and the cannon gave its salute.

When the procession and the other ceremo-

nies were over, the bishops, prebendaries, and canons, after loading me with sweetmeats, handed the dear little angel over to undergo the kissing of the ladies who were present. After being handled till I felt softer than a ripe fig, I was allowed to join my family at home, where new embraces were in store for me from the numerous friends whom my father was in the habit of inviting yearly on this day of festivity, to a magnificent banquet, on which occasion, as my countrymen express it, “the house was thrown out at window.”^a In the evening the refresco was a matter of course; after which followed a splendid ball; during all which time, I was allowed (to my no small gratification) to keep on my angelical dress.

When Raymundo and myself had made some progress in reading and writing, we were placed at a school under the patronage of the Royal

^a *Tirar la casa por la ventana*, is a proverb expressing the sumptuousness of a fête.

Society, of which my father had been one of the founders. Of this we were very glad; for we were sufficiently tired of the master we had at home, and were anxious to make our *début* in a public school; but particularly at one where we expected to be treated with that respect, to which, in our opinion, the sons of a protector of schools were entitled. We were not disappointed in this; for our master Don Enrique treated us with such a marked predilection, that the other boys began cordially to hate us; till having used our influence to save some of them from punishment, they began to look upon us as kind protectors, rather than as odious favourites, in this school it was that I first became candidate for the prizes distributed by the Royal Academy.

The distribution took place in the Consistorio, where the Captain General, the bishop, the magistrates, the principal inhabitants of the town, and the most beautiful women were assembled. The hall, which is very spacious,

was decorated with festoons of flowers, and branches of laurel. At the principal extremity of it was the seat of the President of the Royal Academy, under a magnificent canopy; the other members sat on each side of him. Before them was placed a long table covered with salvers, which contained the gold and silver medals, hanging from silk ribbon knots of all colours, which the president pinned on the children's left side. Upon other tables were exposed to public inspection their various works, which were also handed round to the company.

Facing the president's chair, and quite at the other extremity of the hall, were seats raised one above the other for the youth of both sexes, who were to receive the prizes, each sex divided from the other by a light balustrade, while the side seats from one end of the hall to the other were occupied by the parents and friends of the children.

The president opened the session with a discourse, in which he gave a sketch of the history

of the institution, shewing the advantages arising from it, and concluding with an eulogy on the merit and application of the successful candidates. Several other members of the academy read also their discourses, having for their object the encouragement of the arts and sciences ; after which the distribution of the prizes took place.

Three years after this distribution, I was crowned for three different prizes at the same time—one for geography, another for history, and a third for drawing. This last, from the circumstance of its being above the highest prize they were in the habit of giving, was called “an extraordinary prize.” It is impossible for me to describe the exultation which I felt on this occasion. The president, I remember, in order to make my success more conspicuous, gave these three prizes the precedence over all the rest.

The interest all this excited towards me was so great, that I was literally carried backwards and forwards in the arms of the gentlemen and

ladies from my seat to the president's table, amidst deafening plaudits, music, and the flourishes of trumpets. After this the rest of the candidates were called alternately, first a girl and then a boy, and each received their share of plaudits, kisses, embraces, and sweetmeats, from their parents and friends; though not so profusely as they were bestowed on me.

I must now turn your attention to matters very different from those of which I have just related the particulars.

My reputed father, Don Ignacio, whose religious feelings were no less strong than sincere, was in the habit of attending the exercises in what is called the School of Christ. These consist of a series of meditations on various religious subjects, performed several times in the year, by different sets of persons, who leave their homes and occupy rooms allotted to them in the religious house belonging to the oratorio of Saint Philip Neri, where they submit to the complete controul of the president.

This individual, a priest of the name of Mantilla, joins to a bold and active mind, a deep hypocrisy, and an extreme craftiness. He had been artful enough to obtain unbounded influence over a large portion of the wealthy people of the town, and had for many years been acting in the capacity of member of this Oratorio ; where the vehemence of his preaching attracts general notice. By his wild and enthusiastic descriptions of heaven and hell, he rouses at his pleasure the terror or hopes of his hearers ; and then, when he perceives the whole audience in his power, his voice grows louder and louder, and his words become more and more impassioned, till at last his utterance seems completely choked by sobs and tears, which communicating themselves to the hearts of the congregation, make the whole church resound with sighs and groans.

But the influence this priest exerts over the principal inhabitants of the town is not entirely confined to their spiritual concerns. Good soul ! he takes also under his immediate direction their

temporal and perishable affairs. He introduces himself into their houses under the pretext of offering his spiritual advice, and has more than once disturbed the peace of families, by raising in the minds of the husbands suspicions injurious to their honour; as in fact it happened to our own family. Being their spiritual director, he had the liberty of coming to our house whenever he chose. In one of his visits he met with a young clergyman, an acquaintance of ours, whose permanent residence was in a neighbouring village, but who now and then came to town to spend a few days with his friends. On such occasions he used to take up his residence with us; and being a very cheerful man, he became a general favourite at home. Father Mantilla, who saw the ascendancy that our friend Don Pedro was gaining, and who was as jealous of his authority as a lady of her lover's heart, could not suffer what he considered as an encroachment on his privileges. He therefore began by throwing out insinuations of the most malicious nature against Don Pedro.

The character of sanctity which the hypocrisy of this father had procured him, and the gaiety and vivacity of his rival's manner, which gave to his calumnies a semblance of truth, raised in my father's mind doubts against the rectitude of Don Pedro's intentions. These doubts grew up into suspicions by the constant workings of the crafty Mantilla, who tried to persuade him to forbid Don Pedro his house, as the best means of avoiding the ruin of his wife's peace and honor.

The better to succeed in this object, he thought it necessary that my mother too should be informed of the proposed step ; but this delicate task he chose to execute himself, as he alone was capable of adducing convincing facts, or at any rate of inventing them. He, therefore, told her roundly, that Don Pedro's character was so very exceptionable, that it became a matter of prudence, in order to destroy the suspicion that it might have created in the public mind, to shut her doors against him ; to which he added several stories of his own, which he said he was alone

possessed of as a confessor. Doña Teresa, who had never seen any impropriety in Don Pedro's conduct, was much surprised at the discourse of Father Mantilla. She, who would not have offered for the world the slightest affront to a stranger, could not, even in idea, offer such a glaring insult to a clergyman and a friend ; and consequently opposed the measure with becoming spirit. On this the saint insinuated to my father, that her opposition was the unhappy result of her passion for Don Pedro, and that it now became necessary to act with firmness and resolution, not only with respect to Don Pedro, but to my mother also.

My father became uneasy at this ; but to hurt my mother's feelings, in whose virtuous conduct he had the greatest confidence, and to act inhospitably towards a friend, against whom he had no other proofs to bring, than the insinuations of Father Mantilla, were what he would not do ; and accordingly he rejected this advice. Mantilla, however, was not to be deterred from his pious

purposes ; and, by means of a third person, he gave Don Pedro to understand, that his visits to our house were not agreeable to my father.

Don Pedro of course suspended them, but at the same time wrote to my parents a letter in which he expressed his wounded feelings. Doña Teresa, as it was natural, felt highly provoked at this occurrence, and thought my father had acted with weakness and injustice, both towards Don Pedro and herself ; and, therefore, grieved to the heart as she was, she could not avoid uttering something in the shape of reproach. My father, however, at first, endeavoured to convince her, that she was mistaken in her suspicions ; and assured her, that he had not given such intimation to Don Pedro. But Father Mantilla still continued to represent his rival's conduct as unbecoming the modesty and dignity of a clergyman, and at length the tempers of my parents became every day more soured, the altercations longer, and the expressions more vehement, till nothing was heard or seen but

angry complaints and bitter tears. Thus did this spiritual director succeed in disturbing the quiet of a happy couple, who had never in their lives before uttered an unkind expression towards each other.

Shortly after this, Father Mantilla was created Bishop of Mechoacan, but finding himself too comfortable in this part of the world, ruling over a large portion of wealthy people, in a more despotic manner than he would with a mitre, he thought proper to refuse the bishopric, and to decline crossing the Atlantic, perhaps to endure privations to which he is but little accustomed; at the same time taking care to give to his refusal the appearance of an act of great humility. Upon this the senseless populace proclaimed him a *saint*, and caused the whole city to be illuminated, and grand fire-works displayed in front of his house; in the midst of which the multitude called out to him to appear on the balcony. But his excessive modesty would not allow him to give them this satisfaction; and leaving his

house by a back door, he came to ours, “to conciliate,” as he said, “two virtuous beings, between whom there ought not to exist any rancour,” but of which rancour he alone, as he well knew, had been the sole author. This apparent kindness and condescension was too much for them ; they immediately embraced each other, and falling at his feet, implored his forgiveness for not having listened sooner to his holy advice ; and, to atone for her obstinacy, my mother made a vow to wear the habit of Saint Teresa for six months. This consisted of a black tunic tied round the waist by a leather strap, from which hung a rosary or chaplet of black beads, with a cross at the end ; a slip of cloth of the breadth of the shoulders, called the scapulary, hanging down to the feet both before and behind ; with a sort of mob-cap, to which a black veil was suspended.

My father, too, resolved to retire during the holy week to the Capuchin Convent, where several gentlemen assembled, as in the School of

Christ, for the purpose of spending their time in perfect abstraction from all worldly pursuits, and submitting to the spiritual discipline of the convent.

Raymundo and myself went to see our father during these exercises, and the kind friars invited us to remain with them a couple of days. We did so with the greatest pleasure, as we were always much caressed by them, and it was besides a novelty.

The utmost precision and regularity were observed in the distribution of the penitents' time. Roused by a large bell at five in the morning, they immediately assembled in the church, to begin the meditations appointed for the day. At their meals, they observed a deep silence, and no intercourse, even between each other, was permitted, except during one hour in the evening.

We assisted in all the church offices, and were struck with awe at the settled gloom of the place. At night the unbroken silence of the

temple, whose dark aisles glimmered with the faint light of a few lamps, was now and then interrupted by the deep and plaintive voices of the friars chanting the Miserere, the first part of which was no sooner ended, than the few lights were extinguished, and the friars and penitents, laying bare their backs at the same instant, all began the discipline of scourging, raising their voices and quickening the strokes by degrees. As they proceeded, the vehemence of their singing and scourging became louder and more violent, till at the end of twenty minutes, the former ceased, and nothing was heard but lashings and deep groans ; after which the whole congregation withdrew.

After witnessing this, we returned home, our hearts impressed with the strongest feelings of a wild superstition. The example of such penances from our own parents, the frequent attendance on churches and convents, and principally the extravagant legends, known by the title of “ Lives of the Saints,” one of which we were

in the habit of reading every night, after saying the chaplet, and which, you know, contain the most extraordinary tales of martyrdoms, penances, and austerities; all this inspired my brother Raymundo and myself with the wish of actually putting in practice what had impressed itself upon our imaginations.

My father had at different periods brought us several wooden images of saints and virgins, chalices, chassubles, and every thing required to perform divine service. With these images we formed an altar in an empty room in the house, belonging exclusively to ourselves, whither we retired to imitate the different religious ceremonies we had witnessed during the day, along with two school-fellows, particular friends of ours, whom we persuaded to turn saints also. From that moment we abandoned all boyish tricks, which till then we had entered into with the greatest delight, and every hour that was not devoted to our studies, was spent in that room,

saying mass by turns, and imitating the priests in all their movements and actions, without the least intention of turning them into ridicule.

During one of these exercises, Raymundo, who was more romantically disposed than either of us, proposed that we should imitate the example of St. Jerome, St. Anthony, &c. and withdraw to some cave or desert, to fast, pray, and perform our other exercises, without fear of interruption.

This was too extravagant a proposal not to please us. We all at once approved of it, and began immediately to consider to what cave or desert we should withdraw. We were not long in pitching upon a spot exactly suited to our purpose, and we repaired to it the very next day. Our adventures here were, as you may suppose, attended by sufficient inconvenience to sicken us very soon of our mania for being Saints ; but they were not sufficiently entertaining to induce me to relate them to you. Suffice it, that after

a day or two's absence from home, we returned to our distressed parents, quite cured of our incipient passion for desarts and dried roots.

Shortly after this, a circumstance occurred which, had it not been for the dislike now excited in me by the monks for every thing ecclesiastical, might by possibility have placed me in the awkward dilemma of being hereafter either the Primate of Spain or the Pope of Rome.

There was in the gift of our family, an ecclesiastical benefice, and as in our present generation Raymundo was the heir, Don Ignacio thought it proper to have it transferred to me. As however, he never abused his paternal authority by dictating to us, particularly in things of such importance, he consulted me first. Dazzled, as children generally are, by the importance I saw others acquire when the bishop conferred upon them the clerical tonsure, how could I resist such a proposal? No sooner did Don Ignacio mention it to me, than I reckoned myself a bishop, at least.—“Who knows,” said I to

myself, “but when once a bishop, I may be made a cardinal, and then a pope?” This was a very natural progression ; at all events, I was not wanting in ambition, which was already a great step towards obtaining a seat in the Vatican.

The day for my undergoing the tonsure being settled, I went early in the morning to the bishop’s palace, accompanied only by a particular friend of my father’s. Several of the bishop’s pages, dressed in their clerical habits, met us at the door, and conducted us through various suites of apartments, richly decorated, to a magnificent saloon with glass doors. Between these doors were placed small gilt tables, surmounted by looking glasses, framed in silver. Besides these were several *escaparates*,^a filled with precious stones, valuable curiosities, and sainted relics, disposed in different parts of the room, which we amused ourselves with looking at. In this

^a Enclosed cabinets with glass fronts.

saloon were also a great many priests, whose grave faces and serious deportment did not much contribute to allay the uneasiness I felt on this solemn occasion. The conviction too, that I should be interrogated by the bishop on several religious points, and the fear of being ignorant of them, kept me in a state of no little tremor.

After half an hour's waiting we received the intimation of the bishop to approach ; and we all advanced towards the closet. I trembled as I entered the room of his Señoria Ilustrísima.^a It was a highly decorated apartment ; and the bishop was seated at the end of it, on a damask arm chair, under a lilac velvet canopy beautifully embroidered, and trimmed with gold fringe. A large velvet cushion supported his feet. In the middle of the room was a table, with a magnificent covering, gold crucifix, lighted by two wax tapers, and a large book, splendidly bound. Beneath the table was a velvet cushion, similar

^a Most illustrious Lordship, the title given to bishops.

to that which supported the feet of the bishop.

Having gone through the ceremony of kissing the ring, I stood up before him to be interrogated. The first question his Señoria Ilustrisima put to me was, if I knew the creed. I was so confused at this question, having expected to be desired to unravel some of the more intricate mysteries of our holy religion, that with difficulty I answered, "Yes."

After I had contrived with some difficulty and confusion to get through the creed, and the pater-noster, the bishop proceeded to confer the tonsure on me. He began by rising and going towards the table in the middle of the room ; while one of the clergymen present took me by the hand, and leading me to the cushion near the table, ordered me to kneel. I did so, and after some prayers uttered by the bishop, he cut a little piece of hair from the crown of my head, and gave me his blessing. I kissed his ring again, and left the palace for Saint Philip Neri,

where I confessed, and for the first time of my life, took communion.

Thus tonsured and sanctified, I went home, where my habit of priesthood awaited me in my room, as well as the barber, who shaved that part of my crown from which the bishop had cut the piece of hair; a space no larger than the size of a shilling. Afterwards I put on a black cassoc, a silk cloak also black, and a hat as large as a good sized umbrella. In this becoming dress, (on which my brother Raymundo could not refrain from passing a few merry jokes) I proceeded to the drawing-room, to present myself to my parents, sisters, and those friends who had been invited to celebrate this new era of my life.

Raymundo being at this time on the point of entering the Scotch College, to study the living languages, (which were almost all taught there,) it was thought best that we should both leave home together; and as the figs, dry raisins, and sweetmeats of all sorts that I received every time

I went to see the benedictine monks, were not a little gratifying to my taste, I felt no difficulty in making up my mind to enter at once the college of that monastery, where children intended for the University receive the elementary instructions required for their admission, and where I hoped largely to partake of the good things I had seen in their well furnished pantries. But, alas ! how fallacious are all human calculations !—I found that the fare of a monastery consisted of something else besides dry raisins and sugar plums, as I had pictured to myself ; in fact, I soon learned that dry bread for dinner, and floggings for dessert, were not at all unusual.

On the day of my admission into the college my instructors took me to my room, (which was a little cell, ten feet by six, just large enough to contain my bed, a table, a chair, and my trunk) where I was handed over to Bautista, the fellow that performed the offices of a maid servant. He, first of all, began by teaching me how to make my own bed, afterwards how

to clean and dust my furniture and clothes, and then how to sweep, not only my cell, but also that part of the hall before it, and as much of the yard as belonged to my room. “Do these monks,” said I to myself—“intend me for a waiter at an inn?”

The school was divided into three classes,—to the first belonged those who studied rhetoric and belles lettres, and who were sufficiently versed in Latin, to understand the Roman classics. This class was under the immediate direction of the Rector, a dry, sour monk, without much talent, and I suspect, without much learning;—of the second, were those who had gone through Ovid, Cæsar, Cicero, &c. and who began to understand Horace and Juvenal;—and the third was the nursery, where the young plant was reared up till it acquired sufficient strength to be transplanted into the next class; over this presided a collegian of the first class

To this last class I was introduced, on entering the college; but as I had already studied

the first rudiments of the Latin tongue, I was soon admitted into the second, which was under the direction of the vice-rector, a monk of about thirty-five, good looking, and of a commanding aspect. He was engaging in his manners, and cheerful in his temper ; but subject to fits of bad humour, which appeared both in his countenance, and principally in the manner of wearing his cowl. If after the morning church service he entered the school room uncowled, our hearts gladdened at the sight of his fine shaven poll, and we might expect some indulgence for our errors ; but if on the contrary the cowl was drawn on, not only the conscious idler, who had neglected his lessons, but the industrious boy, who knew them well, trembled at the sight of that abhorred hood, which, like a thermometer, had its degrees of more or less severity, according as he wore it more or less over his eyes.

Their method of teaching by dint of floggings, however, produced in me a contrary effect to

the intended one, for during my residence at college, I rather lessened than increased my little stock of Latin ; but *en revanche*, I learned perfectly how to assist at mass, sing hymns, carry the cross, the censer, the water sprinkler or the *cirial*^a—things far more necessary to obtain promotion in the church, and even admittance into Spanish universities, than all the Latin of a Cicero, or of a Sallust. Indeed from the moment we rose, which in winter was six, and in summer five, we went to church, and remained there (bating half an hour or an hour for our breakfast) till eleven o'clock ; and for three or four days in the week, the whole of the morning, and the greatest part of the afternoon ; besides the hours of prayers in our own oratory ; so that out of the fourteen or fifteen hours of day, we spent, one day with another, eight in our religious duties.

Although the Benedictine monks are per-

^a A large candlestick carried about the church on a pole.

haps the wealthiest in Spain, and do not neglect the good things of this world, we unfortunate collegians were kept in a state of abstinence bordering on starvation. Meagre soups, and some *pillrafas*^a boiled or stewed, were our general ordinary. On great occasions, or festivals, we enjoyed the addition of a plate of boiled rice with milk, sugar, and cinnamon, which was called an *extraordinario*. Our supper consisted in general of a nice ragout of tripe, or of a few bones. And our breakfast, alas! was a libel on that word, being nothing more than a small piece of dry bread. Indeed, but for the judicious supplies of *fiambre*, which my mother took care to send me regularly twice a week, I should not be now here to tell the story. Yet such was the greediness of our rector, that he made us pay a duty of fifty per cent. upon these supplies, or, in other words, he detained half of them for his own use.

^a Pieces of something looking like meat; but which, in reality, are nothing but skin.

It would be no less tedious to you than painful to me, if I were to recount all the miseries and privations that I underwent during the two years I remained at this college. It will be sufficient for me to add, that they gave me as strong a disgust to a cowl and a shaven crown, as I had once conceived a partiality for them ; and when I left the college it was with the full determination of being any thing but a priest ; even though by declining this honourable profession, I was quite convinced that I was giving up a cardinal's hat at least, if not a popedom.

It was soon after this that your arrival at Cigales occurred ; so that I need relate no more of the events of that drama in which you yourself have since been the principal performer.

CHAPTER VIII.

See on those ruby lips the trembling breath,
Those cheeks, now fading at the blast of death ;
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before ;
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more !

Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady.—POPE.

ALTHOUGH Don Facundo has not occupied much of the reader's attention since my last scene with him, several little incidents which occurred during my stay at Agreda convinced me that I still had in him a dangerous enemy.

These facts, added to my ardent wish to continue my career in the service of my country, made me anxious to quit Agreda, and return to my division.

As soon, therefore, as I could do it with safety to my health, I provided myself with cer-

tificates from the doctors and civil authorities of the town, to shew that I had been necessarily confined there; and then, after a parting embrace of my adored Isabella, I quitted the place, accompanied for upwards of a league by a great many of the town's people, who came to bid me adieu. I was, however, very glad when I was left to myself. These partings had affected my spirits too much to admit of my making a proper return to the many kind civilities with which I was overwhelmed.

I reached my division without any accident worthy of relation, and found that its scene of action was along the line of the Ebro, from Santo Domingo de la Calzada to beyond Saragossa. Here we annoyed our enemies by exacting contributions from the garrisons in all the towns along this line, and threatening to hang every Frenchman who fell into our hands if they extorted any thing from the inhabitants.

The people of the open towns were also directed to invite whatever French troops were

there to entertainments at their houses, and as soon as they were intoxicated to inform us of it. We would then hasten thither, seize their arms, kill those who attempted to resist, and carry off the remainder as prisoners. Sometimes we passed the nights in the neighbouring villages, where the French had raised little fortresses, and while we were feasting and regaling ourselves, they were shut up and listening to the sounds of our guitars, and to the patriotic songs the girls sang for our entertainment.

As in all the frontier towns the inhabitants kept an exact account of all the French who entered Spain, as well as of the wounded who quitted it, we were informed to a man of the number of those who were coming and going, and directed our operations according to this knowledge ; while the French, seeing the eager curiosity of these good people, (who were posted at the entrances of the town to count them) congratulated themselves on the excellent spirit that reigned in Spain. No sooner, however,

had they penetrated a little further into the country, than we showed them less unequivocally what sort of affection the people of Spain felt for their invaders.

One day on arriving at a little village, within a league of Logroño, on the road to Vittoria, Amor, at that time our commandant, deputed me to enter it, and ascertain the exact number of French, in order that we might endeavour to surprize them. Having dressed myself in my plain clothes, I proceeded to the village, where I found the women sitting at the door of their hovels spinning, and the men with their monteras almost over their eyes and wrapped up in their brown cloaks; some with a segar in their mouths, leaning against the walls, and others sitting on the brim of the well that was in the middle of the square, their eyes fixed with a kind of gloomy contempt on some French soldiers who were loading a cart at the door of an inn close by. I went straight up to the inn, and enquiring of the landlord, if there was room

for me, was shewn up a shattered staircase that shook beneath my feet, and entered a long, dark, and narrow room, where I saw two or three peasant women and the curate of the hamlet in one corner of the large hearth; some French soldiers in the middle, sitting on their knapsacks, their chins resting on the hilt of their sabres; and in the other corner a young woman, rather elegantly dressed in a silk *basquiña*, of long *fleco*,^a and her face partly concealed by a black lace veil. She was leaning her head on her left arm, that rested against the *poyo*,^b and was pressing her right hand to her heart, as if in some pain or severe affliction. A French officer sat beside her, his eyes fixed on her pale countenance, while his own expressed the deepest melancholy. The whole group kept the most profound silence, only broken now and then by a sigh from the young lady, which attracted on

^a Flock.

^b A kind of shelf where the plates and dishes are arranged in order.

her the eyes of all, particularly of the women that sat opposite to her. I stood a minute or two gazing on them, at last—" *Bon jour, Messieurs,*" cried I, as I approached them, "*Il semble que vous vous êtes très bien nichés ici.*"

" *Pas si bien,*" replied one of the soldiers, taking away his pipe from his mouth; "for if we had but *de quoi boire*, we should not be sitting here like so many mummies in the catacombs of Egypt."

"Were you ever there?" inquired I.

" *Oui, parbleu, j'y ai été.*"

"That was a hostile country," said I, "and doubtless you prefer this."

" *Morbleu, vous vous trompez,*" replied he, "for there at least we had the *grand Napoléon* with us, and I would suffer any thing to be with him. Besides, although the Bedouins followed us every where, as if they were our shadows, we might there with safety bend down to drink a little water from a fountain; but here

we meet the stiletto under its very pebbles. We cannot take a step but some brigand rises from underneath the ground, like Cleofas from his bottle."

At this instant several shots penetrated through the large aperture on the top of the room, and a ball struck the sabre on which the speaker was leaning—"These are some of their tricks, I wager," said he coolly ; and getting up he seized his arms. The curate and the women who sat with them, rushed out by a little door at the side of the room. I followed them, and found myself in a yard at the back of the house amidst some of our troops, who, apprized by a peasant of the number of French, had already begun their attack, and were climbing up the roof of the house. Presently the French officer whom I had seen in the room, rushed out of the little door communicating by an outside staircase with the yard, followed by the young lady. On perceiving us, he started back with

surprise, while she seized his arm, and pointing to the opposite door, they both immediately disappeared.

Meanwhile our men succeeded in taking possession of the inn, and of the adjoining houses, and in surprizing the greater number of those who were in them ; but the officer who escaped had now assembled the rest of his men, and was coming towards us with at least equal numbers. As our troops were scattered about, we were obliged to beat a retreat, and speedily to leave the village. The French, exhilarated by this circumstance, pressed forward in pursuit, and killed five or six of our men. Seeing it was impossible for us to succeed in escaping, if we persisted in carrying away as prisoners the French we had surprized, we were compelled to shoot them, and hasten to the mountains, which we now very soon reached, fifteen of our men having been imprudently sacrificed by not waiting for my return.

On the following day, the women I had seen

in the inn came to our station, bringing with them the young lady with her hands tied before her. The darkness of the room had prevented me from seeing her features well, but what was my surprize, when I now recognized in her Teresa, one of the friends and companions of my infancy ! She knew me immediately, and fixing her weeping eyes on me, her utterance choaked with sobs—" Oh, Esteban !" exclaimed she, stretching her hands towards me, " is it you ? Oh ! protect me from these women, and have pity on me !"

I ran towards her, and pushing the women aside, untied her hands ; assuring her, that while I lived she had nothing to fear. But the women began vociferating that she was a *traitress*, and an *afrancesada*, through whose assistance the French officer had escaped, and our attack failed. Our men, glad to find a more plausible excuse for the failure of their attempt in the treason of Teresa than in their own imprudence, began to call aloud for her death, joined

by some of the officers, who advanced to seize her. But throwing myself before her, so as to cover her with my body, and grasping my unsheathed sabre in my hand, I vowed they should sooner trample on my body than hurt one hair of her head. A general murmur of displeasure ran through the troops; but our commander arriving at this moment, enquired into the matter, and, to prevent further dispute, ordered a court martial to be formed to try her. I immediately undertook her defence; and she gave me the following account of her arrival at the village, and her conduct towards the French officer.

“ I was residing in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, with a relation of mine, when a French detachment of cavalry arriving there, and the commanding officer being billeted in our house, I had the misfortune to please him. He was a man as repulsive in his aspect, as coarse in his manners. I detested his very sight, and treated his advances with the contempt they deserved.

The night previous to his departure, and after we had all retired to rest, we were suddenly awakened by an alarm that the house was on fire. I leapt from my bed, and rushed out of the room to escape the flames that were already penetrating into it; but no sooner was I out of the house, than I was seized by some of the French dragoons, placed in a covered waggon, and conducted out of the town. I had on only my night clothes, and a cloak that had been thrown over me. About midway from St. Domingo to Logroño, the ferocious officer came into the waggon, and placed himself beside me. Terrified as I was at this, I was yet able to utter such piercing cries, that they attracted the attention of the officers of another party, who were passing at the time, and who began to upbraid my enemy for his unmanly conduct. The dragoon officer, piqued at these reproofs, challenged one of the others. They fought, and my persecutor was killed. I was then taken under the protection of the victor, and conducted to Logro-

ño, where he procured me these clothes I now have on, and promised to conduct me back to St. Domingo, on the following day, whither they had received orders to go. We were on our way thither, when he was countermanded for Vittoria, and as I could not be abandoned on the road, it was agreed I should be left in the first village we came to, under the curate's care. But on arriving there, the latter treated me as an *afrancesada*, and would not receive me into his house. This happened yesterday; and while I was bewailing my unhappy lot, an attack was made by your guerrillas on the house we were in. I saw that the French officer who had saved my honor was on the point of falling into their hands.—Gratitude imposed on me the duty of saving him, and having observed a door in the room by which I thought he might escape, I led him to it, and he succeeded in eluding your party. Your guerrillas being driven from the village, the French officer returned, and keeping his promise, insisted on the

curate's taking care of me, and finding means to re-conduct me safe to St. Domingo. That man promised he would do so ; but instead of keeping his word, he placed me in the hands of the women who have conducted me hither, and who from the moment I was given up to them, never ceased to abuse and ill treat me."

Such was the account of the unhappy Teresa. To me her conduct seemed more deserving of praise than punishment. Dragged from her home under the most afflicting circumstances, she had heroically defended herself against all the violence and fury of a brutal savage ; and even in what she was now accused of, she had shown a noble spirit, by saving, at the risk of her own life, that of the man who had preserved her honor. These facts, and the deep interest she naturally excited in me, by recalling to my mind all the pleasing circumstances of my early youth, called forth all my energy, and I defended her with an eloquence that till then I did not know I possessed. But it was all in

vain. Those blind and bigoted defenders of my country, swayed by the curate's opinion, and by their own prejudices, found the unhappy Teresa guilty, and condemned her to be shot through the back as a traitor !

How the unhappy girl died I know not, for after her condemnation I studiously absented myself from all their proceedings. But die she did ; and even at this moment, the recollection alone shakes every fibre of my frame.

It was some time before I could recover the shock ; and I confess I could hardly bear to look on some of my comrades after it. This sad event produced so strong an effect on my mind, that had not imperious duty forbidden it, I should not have hesitated an instant in quitting the corps, and retiring from the service. But I felt that my country still required the exertions of even the weakest of her sons, and that while she did so, I had no right to indulge my private feelings at the expence of any thing that might contribute to her safety and welfare.

CHAPTER IX.

With pleasure and amaze I stand transported !

Sure 'tis a dream ! dead and alive at once !

Cato—ADDISON.

I AM now arrived at that period of my history, when our brave and generous allies had carried their victorious arms from Lisbon to the Pyrenees. The battle of Vittoria had already covered them with glory. The fall of Pamplona, and that of San Sebastian, had crowned their triumphs: *les enfans de la victoire* were dragging their dead eagles, mangled by the lions of England and Spain, over the Pyrenees, and scarcely anything remained of them in our

desolate fields, save the bones of their comrades, and the trophies of their former pride.

In passing near those spots where a battle had been fought, we saw hundreds of enormous vultures, stalking among the dead, and looking at a distance like a great assemblage of monks, in their black robes. They were often so intent on their prey, that we killed several before the rest would fly away. The noise made then, by the flapping of their wings, was tremendous, and even awful. The reflections that suggested themselves to the mind, in walking over those silent fields of death, were the more gloomy, as no remembrance of dangers, fatigues, or anxieties, weakened the effect produced by the horrible scene around. In the heat of battle, I have stept over the dead and the wounded, heard the lamentations and groans of the dying, seen their blood flow in streams ; and yet felt no horror, nor any very strong sensation. But not so now ; every step chilled my blood,—those mutilated corpses, those broken skeletons of

human beings who might have been occupied in adding to the comforts and happiness of mankind, filled my soul with horror at the detested ambition of those men who had it in their power to render millions of their fellow creatures happy, instead of spreading nothing but death and misery around. But enough of these reflections.

One day, as I was on a foraging party with a detachment of cavalry, we came to Roncesvalles, a small village situated in the lovely Valle del Bastan, where we met another party of Spanish troops, who had just arrived there on the same errand with ourselves. Whilst I was taking some refreshment in a neighbouring house, the two parties began disputing who should be first served, and a soldier ran to inform me that bloodshed was likely to ensue, if I did not come to establish order. I rushed out of the house sword in hand, and in my way met the officer of the other body of troops likewise running to the spot. But on coming near enough

to him, what was my mingled terror and astonishment on recognizing my lost brother, Raymundo!—I sprang forward to throw myself into his arms; but one of his soldiers mistaking my eagerness to embrace him for an intention to attack, stabbed me with his sword, and I fell into Raymundo's arms.

The sight of my brother's distress immediately suspended all hostilities. The poor soldier who had thus shown his affection, was extremely alarmed; but his fears were speedily banished; for the wound was but slight,—the blow and my own agitation being the principal causes of my fall. After the first transports of this extraordinary meeting had subsided, I was all anxiety to know how the supposed dead Raymundo had escaped, as it were, from the very grasp of death.

“Although,” said he smiling, “we are on a spot as famous for its really glorious recollections, as for its fabulous wonders—where Rolando, Amadis de Gaul, and the twelve peers

of France performed many of their prodigies; unfortunately the days of disembodied spirits are gone by. I must therefore endeavour to prove to you that my appearance here, (which may well astonish you as it does) is not the effect of a miracle.

“ I shall be brief, however,” continued he, “ as I must see my men file off to the place of our destination. When I had fairly separated from you, I began to consider seriously what I should really do. I had, you know, a lieutenant’s commission to serve under Ballesteros, who at that moment was near Cadiz. At this time the whole country was occupied by the French, and there was every probability of my falling into their hands, if I attempted to join my corps. Then again, the accounts we received daily of the operations of our regular troops were so truly discouraging, that I thought it would be better at once to determine on joining the first guerrilla partisans who came in my way. I accordingly did so, and their leader fortunately

happened to be the Empecinado. Having presented myself to him, and avowed the wish to be employed under him, as preferring the active and adventurous life of a guerrilla to that wherein there was less honour to be reaped, this frank and bold patriot received me immediately into his troop, and soon after confided to me the command of a small squadron of cavalry. I shall omit the detail of my own feats, and of theirs; but we harassed the French so much along the whole line of garrisons from Segovia to Madrid, that they formed several plans to destroy us, none of which, however, succeeded.

“As our object was to increase our numbers, we went frequently into the towns, and collected all the young men who were willing to follow us. One day I came to Villa Castin, and on passing under the balcony of Don Eusebio Ramirez, I observed a most beautiful young creature sitting on it, employed in needle-work. I requested the Alcalde to billet me there, and on my arrival, was received by the family in the

kindest manner. It was impossible for any man possessing a heart to be long with the gentle and generous Dorotea without feeling his soul kindled into the holiest flame. For my part, I loved her from the moment I saw her, nor did I hesitate a moment to declare it to her and her excellent parents. They were favourable to my wishes, and though the circumstances under which I was placed delayed our union, still there was in the possession of her affection something above human felicity, which rendered the period I passed beside her the most delightful of my existence. But I really believe I was born to be crossed in every attachment I form, and more bitterly in each succeeding one. Having persuaded Ramirez to let his son, (a fine youth of fifteen, of whom Dorotea was dotingly fond,) enter my corps, I departed and took leave of her, alas, for the last time!

“A month after this departure, as I had been giving chase to the Colonel into whose hands

I afterwards fell, who was one of the most blood-thirsty villains that ever trod the Spanish soil, I penetrated with young Ramirez into a wood near Sta Maria de la Nieve, to take some repose in the house of a vicar who lived there; but no sooner had I entered, than I was seized by several of the soldiers I had been pursuing, and carried with my companion and the vicar to a neighbouring village, where Dunier was with the rest of his men.

“*Je vous tiens, brigands, je vous tiens,*” cried the ferocious Dunier, when he saw us enter.—‘You shall pay with your heads for your *brigandages*’—and with a horsewhip he held in his hand, he blushed not to strike his hand-cuffed prisoners! But that was not all,—the sanguinary villain was capable of still deeper infamy. Not contented with devoting us to an ignominious death, having learned my affection for Dorotea, and that young Ramirez was her brother, he took us to Villa Castin, there to perish on a

scaffold like assassins, before the eyes of the dearest objects of our hearts !

“ You know what happened there, you know the horrible barbarities of that monster towards the unfortunate Dorotea. My men, however, informed of the circumstances that had placed us in Dunier’s hands, and of the place of our confinement, resolved to save us if possible, and arrived at Villa Castin a few minutes after our execution. On hearing of it, they became like enraged lions. They rushed upon the French without heeding their superior numbers, and succeeded in driving them out of the town. We were immediately taken from the scaffold, and, to avoid a surprise, carried to a secluded spot, where the wounded were usually kept. Here every thing that could be done to restore us was tried. But of the three I was the only one who recovered. It is impossible to describe to you the joy this accident created among our men : from that moment they believed me the

favourite of heaven, and if not altogether invulnerable, at least fated not to lose my life by the hands of the French.

“ You may conceive that I was not slow to profit by this delusion of theirs, to take ample vengeance on our enemies for Dorotea’s death. I led them to the very gates of Madrid, and would sometimes, in the very sight of the French, carry off their sentries. One day we went to the Prado, where Joseph used frequently to spend the moments he devoted to pleasure in the arms of some of our faithless country-women. In this retreat, all seemed to have abandoned themselves to voluptuousness; the very guards had their mistresses with them, and we penetrated even into the interior of these royal grounds with hardly any difficulty. The flight of the king and his attendants was so precipitate, and the rout of the few soldiers who made any resistance so complete, that we actually sat down and enjoyed the repast that had been prepared for them, carrying afterwards with

us several valuable ornaments with which that pleasure house was adorned.

“At last, when Napoleon recalled his legions from Spain, to oppose, in the plains of Thuringe, a bulwark to the host of barbarians who were pressing on his rear from the heart of Moscovy, and his brother Pepe,^a unable to stand on his tottering throne, unsupported by French bayonets, undertook his flight towards the Pyrenees with all his crew,—I was the first who with my troop entered the capital, proclaiming Ferdinand and the constitution framed by the Congress at Cadiz.

“It is impossible to describe the joy of the inhabitants at the sight of their deliverers.—The rear of the French army was still in some of the streets skirmishing with us, and the windows even of the same streets were crowded with people, waving their handkerchiefs, and crying out, “Long live Ferdinand and the Constitu-

^a The familiar name given by the Spaniards to Joseph.

tion.”—“Long live our liberators.” As soon as the French had passed the city gates, every door was thrown open, and the anxious inhabitants rushed out of their houses to embrace us, and invite us to go in and take refreshments. We were to them like friends whose deaths they had already deplored. We found it impossible to disengage ourselves from the repeated embraces of the multitude who thronged round us, so as to continue our march on the rear of the enemy ; and it was not till they heard of the approach of the English troops that we found ourselves at liberty to proceed.

“At last Joseph arrived at Vittoria, and Wellington was now close upon his heels. The French army was fighting for the last time on the soil of Spain, but that army was no longer young or vigorous. The hopes and illusions that had led them on were passed ; they were now dragging along with them a king, a court, and a party, pursued by the curses of the land from which they were flying. I need not

describe the battle, for he who has seen one, has in effect seen all.

“After it was concluded, the road from Vittoria to Bayonne being intercepted by the English and the French troops, the partisans of the latter threw themselves on that of Pamplona, across the mountains. The confusion is indescribable—infantry, cavalry and artillery disputed among themselves paths already encumbered with military waggons, cannons, carts, dead and wounded horses and dying persons. In the midst of these dreadful scenes, which after all present nothing but sights common to ordinary defeats, was a spectacle peculiar to the horrors of civil war. An immense number of persons of consideration—consisting chiefly, however, of old men, women and children, victims of their attachment to the power of Joseph, endeavoured to make their way through the scattered columns of the troops. The multitude of elegant equipages, carriages beautifully decorated with coats of arms and fine gildings,

covered waggons conducted by postilions in rich liveries, horses and mules richly laden, would have given to this precipitate flight the appearance of a royal visit to the Escorial, were it not that death and despair every where attended this magnificent convoy. Many of these brilliant equipages were shattered to pieces by the fire of the cannon, or thrown into the ditches by the French soldiers; others were hurried by the affrighted horses through the files of the enemy's infantry, which they overturned and trod upon.

“In this general confusion, several grantees and illustrious ladies, some prelates, and high officers of state, (obliged to alight and make their way on foot,) were dragging their embroideries and their exhausted limbs through the dust and the blood. Chests of money strewed the road; but no fugitive thought of thrusting his hand into them. The loose horses overthrew the children that the mother was leading by the hand. The youthful husband, who

thought himself happy in having saved his spouse from the sword of the enemy, saw her fall under the fire of the *obuse*. The provident father, with his proscribed children, trying to preserve the small treasure which was to buy them bread in a foreign land, was trodden to death by the pitiless crowd that pressed forward.

“The voice of the soldiers who called aloud for the number of their regiments, that of the officers who vainly endeavoured to establish order, the cries of the fugitives enquiring after their dispersed families, filled the air with the most mournful sounds. The unfortunate *Josephinos*^a ran confusedly striving to get before one another; for they knew very well, that though they might be spared by foreign enemies, their fellow citizens would never forgive them. Yet humanity even in this scene of mourning and desolation was not quite forgotten. A few of the French soldiers, dis-

^a The partizans of Joseph were so designated.

regarding their own dangers to assist those unfortunate people, (rendered so by their masters but not by themselves) made with their arms and bodies a rampart for them, against those of our regiments who were on the point of reaching them. The hussar and the dragoon were seen flying and carrying on their horses, with a melancholy and respectful air, the wife or the grown up daughter of some of the partizans of Joseph; and the foot soldier was assisting the young female, who, wearied with fatigue, was ready to sink. The *cantinières* themselves, went about the ranks distributing the reviving brandy indiscriminately to the Spaniard and the Frenchman, dressing their wounds and singing warlike songs to recall their courage.

“ My heart sickened at the distressing scene. I turned my horse another way, to regain the high road. As I leaped over a ditch, I observed behind the hedge, a young lady kneeling, and tearing her garments to dress the wounds of a man who lay stretched on the ground. On

hearing me approach, she turned her head round, and uttering a loud shriek, threw herself on the body of the man, who, however, made an effort to sit up. I immediately took out my handkerchief, and waving it to dissipate their alarms, approached. A piercing cry escaped from the lips of the young lady, who rising suddenly, ran to me. Think of my horror on finding my knees clasped in our sister Marienne's arms, and our father lying wounded at my feet.

“ I leapt from my horse, and threw myself on his wounded body. I mixed my tears with his ; and after a short silence, during which his words were perfectly choked by the deep sighs that swelled his breast—‘ You behold in me,’ said he, ‘ a fugitive, though not one who quits his home to avoid a foreign enemy, but who flies the country he loves with the enemies he abhors. I am a Josephino !—but no—I am not—I have been made one—and here I lay wounded, without knowing if I shall ever again embrace my wife and children !’

“His sobs impeded his utterance.—‘My dear father,’ cried I, ‘night is fast approaching; let me aid you to get on my horse, and take you where you will be properly attended.’ Then ordering one of my men, who had accompanied me, to take Marienne before him, I led my horse by the bridle, till we reached a little village on the right of Vittoria, where my father’s wound was dressed, and found to be not dangerous.

“Next day, having taken some repose during the night, he found himself better. I was anxious to know by what occurrences he had been brought there; but unwilling to awaken melancholy recollections, I made no enquiries till the following day, when still improving, he resolved to go in a few days to Viana, where a friend of his lived, and then he briefly related to me what had happened since our departure, nearly in the following words.—‘Some months after you left us I received letters from a friend of mine at Madrid, in which I was informed, that a great man

at the court of Joseph, whom he knew not whether to call an enemy or a friend, was straining every nerve to have me nominated President of the Tribunal of Criminal Justice of Valladolid ; an office peculiarly obnoxious, and which could only be offered to prejudice my established character for patriotism.

“ ‘ In fact, shortly after, I received a dispatch from King Joseph’s Minister of Justice, nominating me to the Presidency of Criminal Justice, and requesting me to proceed to the immediate installation of my charge ; it being well understood, that if I refused to do so, I should be conducted prisoner to France. To this, however, I did not hesitate a moment to reply, by a determined refusal to accept the proffered office.

“ ‘ The answer to this reply was an order served upon me at midnight by a French officer, who, insensible to the cries and lamentations of your wretched mother and sisters, dragged me from my bed to have me conducted to France

with an escort that was setting off that same instant. A seal was then put upon all my papers, and a sequestration made on all my estates. Having reached Burgos, after many privations and insults, a dungeon was allotted me in the prison of the castle, and I was loaded with chains. Here I remained a whole month, pining and suffering severely from the unwholesome food that was allowed me, and the dampness of the place, till at last I fell dangerously ill. At this time, several of my friends from Valladolid wrote to me, describing the state of my family as most distressing, and urging the necessity of my accepting the Presidency, as the only resource left to save them from actual starvation. At the same time they represented to me that by so doing, far from injuring the great cause of our country, I should have a thousand opportunities of rendering service to it, by depriving the French of the means of abusing their power, and delivering from inevitable death those

who would else fall victims under their military commissions and decrees. There were in these reasons things which did not altogether satisfy me ; every kind of duplicity being the abhorrence of my soul ; yet the knowledge that my innocent family was perishing, and that I myself on my death-bed, so long as I remained a prisoner, could have no means of assisting them, determined me at last to yield.

“ ‘ After many a mental struggle, and many a heart pang, I informed the French Governor of Burgos of my resolution. Yet, strange as it may appear, I almost hoped he might say it was now too late to think of it, and that I must be conducted to France ; but no sooner did he hear of it, than he came himself to the dungeon where I was confined, and causing my fetters to be knocked off, closed me in his arms with an affected tenderness. His embrace was to me like the coil of a serpent. I was almost on the point of retracting the declaration I had made ;

but I reflected that an upright man should at least be consistent even in his weakness.

“ ‘ Every sort of assistance being now given me, I recovered fast from my illness, after which I returned to Valladolid. On my arrival there, the sequestration had already been raised ; but the miseries my innocent wife and children had suffered were still visible on their countenances. Too high-minded to receive a favour from any one, they had preferred to owe their livelihood to the scanty means raised by their own labour.

“ ‘ Having now entered on the exercise of my functions, I lost no opportunity to serve those whom our invaders, designating by the name of insurgents, accused of high treason. Their decrees, which only dealt blood and captivity, became in my hands harmless weapons. My fellow citizens congratulated themselves on having a President who, instead of being their terror, as the French wished, was their protector,

My conduct, however, was not unattended with perils. Menaces and bitter remonstrances were daily sent to me by the French authorities, but I was not to be intimidated by them.

“ ‘ At length Joseph’s retreat took place, and Valladolid was to be evacuated also. I held an appointment under the intruder—it is true that circumstances obliged me to accept it—but I should not have considered myself the less criminal, had I abandoned it while there was still a chance of serving my country in that employment. I resolved therefore to make the most painful sacrifice man ever made—to quit my family, friends, and if necessary, my country, to fly with those same enemies, from whom I had received the deepest injuries,—but honor, principle, and consistency, bade me do it. In spite, therefore, of the prayers, tears, and even threats of a great number of the inhabitants, and of my friends and family, whom I informed of my resolution—when Joseph left Valladolid,

I too quitted it, determined to perform my duty and adhere to his fortune, at least so long as he remained on the Spanish soil.*

“ ‘ This battle, however, has for ever put an end to his power. Neither his own arms, nor the people’s voice will bring him back to his lost throne. My duty to principle being therefore performed, I will again restore myself to my home, having the satisfaction of consistency for my consolation, should my fellow citizens be unjust enough to reproach me for my conduct.’

“ When our father had done speaking, I

Don Ignacio’s conduct will, to a selfish and calculating mind, appear the acme of extravagance and quite out of probability ; but I can only say, that Don Ignacio is not the only Spaniard possessing those high notions of honor. I myself have known several others, who, like him, were victims to them, and who even expatriated themselves with the enemies they detested. It is chiefly in despotic countries, where the virtues of men are so often called into action by acts of oppression, that the souls of some acquire that high temper, so seldom to be met with any where else.

threw my arms round his neck, my eyes dimmed with tears. Never in the most brilliant days of his prosperity had he excited so much veneration and tenderness as now, stretched on a straw bed, exhausted with pain and fatigue ; but bearing his evils with a noble resolution, and firm in his principles to the last.

“ I remained with him and Marienne till he was able to be removed to Viana, whither I accompanied him. There, after seeing him comfortably settled in the house of his friend, I again took leave of him, and rejoined my guerrillas, till the ever varying changes of war brought me to your arms.”

Having thus brought his narrative to a close, Raymundo gave some indispensable orders to his men, and hastened with me to embrace our friend and comrade Ramirez, who was posted near the high road to France, only an hour's ride from Roncesvalles. Their meeting was as affecting as the remembrance of their losses was lively. Ramirez, in particular, seemed quite convulsed

with his grief—"You see me now," said he to Raymundo, as soon as he could speak, "a solitary pilgrim in this barren desert; but my task is almost done. Let me but see the last of these barbarians driven from our soil, and then I will join those they have taken from me."

We waited in silence till this paroxysm had a little subsided; for no consolation we could offer would have soothed sorrows like his. But the sight of Raymundo every now and then completely overcame him; and it was not till some time after the latter departed, (which he was obliged to do in a few hours,) that Ramirez recovered his usual calm, but melancholy demeanour

CHAPTER IX.

But now I am return'd, and that war thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires.

SHAKESPEARE.

Two months after this meeting with Raymundo, hostilities having quite ceased in Spain, and there being no longer any occasion for my services, I demanded and obtained leave of absence; but my brother, being among those Spaniards who marched into the South of France, under Lord Wellington, did not return home with him, as we had anticipated.

In my way home, I need not say that I flew to Agreda, with all the eagerness a lover feels

after a long absence from a mistress so tenderly beloved as Isabella. On my arrival there, I went 'directly to my kind friend, Doña Lucia, who welcomed me with tears of joy. From her I learned that tidings had been received of Don Lorenzo, and that they were hourly expecting to hear from him or see him. As for Don Facundo, he left Agreda for Madrid, shortly after my departure, and seeing Joseph had returned to the capital, and more French troops entered the Peninsula, he had again assumed his post of Chamberlain: but had abandoned it again on the Usurper's flight to Vittoria. This information she had obtained from his own son, who was shortly expected from a country house near Agreda, where Doña Lucia had met him.

Whilst she was yet speaking, Isabella (who had been sent for on my arrival,) entered the room, without, however, expecting to find me. The surprise and joy created by my presence were too much for her. She changed colour,

and would have fallen, had I not caught her in my arms. With the most tender endearments I recalled her to life. Those large dark eyes were again raised to mine with the same expression of tenderness; while the sweet smile, the gentle caress, the tears of joy that bathed her glowing cheek, all bespoke her constancy and affection, which absence had not even weakened.

After a few happy days past at Agreda, I now proceeded on my journey homewards, my imagination feeding on the past, and raising fine castles in the air for the future, till the distant hills and ruined turrets, from whose tops I had so often in my boyhood gazed over the landscape with delight, changed the train of my ideas, and brought to my remembrance the golden age of infancy, with all its pleasing images. Amid those scenes, I had felt the most innocent and uninterrupted happiness: there I had enjoyed our delightful parties of pleasure—our youthful sports, and those still gayer hours of childhood—that happy age when a smile

chases away the tear before it has rolled down the cheek.

Whence arises that pleasure felt by man, when after a long absence he returns to the spot in which he spent the hours of boyhood—the spot where he first began to feel the great principle of our existence—a thirst for enjoyment? Is it not that the griefs of maturer age being deeper, efface the recollection of those of childhood; while, on the contrary, the first feelings of pleasure being from their novelty more vivid than any succeeding ones, leave on the mind a more lasting impression of delight?—Alas! when I reflect that other times must still come when the pains and pleasure of youth will appear trifling and puerile, I ask myself if our powers of feeling will remain as they are, or will our hearts be as it were exchanged for others, more capable of resisting the repeated and severe trials of life?

When I had at last left entirely behind me the wide extending plains between Burgos and Valla-

dolid, I grew quite impatient to reach Cigales, and spurred on my horse to behold again that home in which I had passed the sweetest moments of my existence. I reached it ; but alas ! the hand of war had pierced and shattered its walls ; its chambers were ruined, and deserted ; and its roof fallen and crumbling with the earth on which it lay. Those trees, which had grown up with me, were either withered, or cut down, or burnt. The elder tree that stood in a corner of the court yard, alone had escaped the general ravage ; but the hand that protected it from weeds was gone, and its half withered branches were almost choked up by tall twining plants. I caused Anton to draw water from the well that stood in the middle of the court, whose green borders showed its desolate condition ; and with my sabre removed some of the weeds from about it, and then moistened its parched roots once more.

Having thus prolonged the existence of this sole witness of my infancy, I proceeded towards

Valladolid ; but on passing through the village, some of the inhabitants recognizing me, the news of my arrival spread in a moment throughout it, and all the villagers crowded round me to bid me welcome. In the midst of the confusion, I heard a voice crying out, " Let me pass ; for he is my master's son,"—and on turning my head, I saw the Cachicana, pushing away with her two elbows, and trying to pierce through the disrespectful multitude, who would not make way for her. No sooner did I see her than I ran to embrace her. The poor woman wept and sobbed, as she held me tightly embraced ; at last, she exclaimed, " You will see no more our Manuel. He is gone—for ever gone !"

" Wife !" cried the Cachican, who had also arrived on the spot, " He fell for God and his country : what more could you wish ?" This short, but eloquent speech, had its effect ; and the poor Cachicana wiped away her tears with the corner of her apron.

Having disengaged myself from the arms of

these good people, I proceeded on my way to Valladolid, and reached home shortly after I had sent Anton to apprise my family of my arrival. As I approached, I saw two of my sisters on the balcony, straining their necks to catch the first glance of me, and announce it to the rest of the family. Suddenly they all disappeared, and came running towards me. I leapt from my horse, and in a moment felt myself entwined with their arms. One moistened my cheeks with her tears, another my neck; the younger ones had seized my arms, and were kissing my hands. I could not move a step, but my legs were embraced by the little things.

But how shall I find words to express the pleasure I felt at embracing my tender foster parents?—at seeing the joy my presence diffused on their anxious countenances? There are sensations in our nature too deep to be defined; the words, joy, delight, rapture, are after all but inadequate signs for such emotions. To be alternately closed in the arms of my father and mo-

ther, to be kissed by them, and have my cheeks bathed with their tears, and to be called by the endearing name of child, had something melting in it, which caused my tears to flow more abundantly than they had ever done.

Three years of absence and dangers had naturally created in all a deep anxiety about my fate; for I had not been able, during all that time, to acquaint them of it; but my presence relieved their alarms, every unpleasant image was effaced from their minds,—and the news I brought from Raymundo completed the happiness and satisfaction felt at my arrival.

As soon as this became known in the town, all our friends and acquaintances came to welcome me, and congratulate the family on my return; and it was resolved by my parents, that this event should be celebrated with balls and refrescos. The days for these festivals were fixed for the end of the month; by which time Raymundo too would be there to share in them.

Two days after my arrival home, Don Ignacio received a letter from Don Lorenzo, dated Madrid the 16th of May ; a translation of which I shall lay before the reader, because it describes the important events which occurred from the moment of the king's entry into Spain, till he reached the capital. Before doing this, however, I ought to glance at the political occurrences that took place previously to that epoch.

The Constitution framed at Cadiz, under the roarings of the French cannon, was proclaimed in that sanctuary of Spanish independence, in 1812, on the anniversary day of King Ferdinand's accession to the throne, in virtue of Charles's abdication. There was not in the Isla a dignitary of the church, a general, a counsellor of Castille or of the Indies, a knight of the four orders, a member of the King's government, or even an inquisitor, who did not hasten to take his oath before the assembled congress. The Duke del Infantado solicited the honour of appearing at their bar to acknowledge before the

representatives of the nation, the sovereignty of the people, as did also all the nobles who were then at Cadiz, or who, in other words, had not joined the intruder, or fled to foreign countries : even the members of the regency did not hesitate to perform this act. As the French troops evacuated our provinces, every city town, village, or hamlet ; with their chapters, corporations and fraternities, shewed the same zeal and enthusiasm in proclaiming a code which was the reward of all our toils, and which seemed to be the wish of every heart.

From that day all the great continental powers, the cabinet of St. James's, the house of Braganza, the Bourbons of Sicily, even the Jesuits of Palermo, rivalled each other in the praise and homage they all rendered to our National Congress ; and formed a more close alliance with Spain. All treaties signed by them contained this clause—"that they recognized as legitimate, the extraordinary Cortes, and also the Constitution they had enacted."

The Autocrat of the North, to whom the regency of Spain had sent a copy of our code, and who at that moment had Napoleon in his territories, answered,—“ he had received that new testimonial of the sentiments which animated the Spanish Government in his favour, with the more pleasure as such a solemn act would serve as a guarantee of the prosperity of a nation so loyal and generous.” The House of Braganza, the Bourbons of the two Sicilies, and the Infanta Doña Joaquina, the present Queen of Portugal, wrote to the government to express their gratitude and joy in the name of their captive brothers. Sometimes afterwards, General Zayas brought word from Valency, that our young monarch approved of the unanimous vow of his people. Thus our code was sanctioned by every power, and our liberties established under the flattering homage and encouragement of every crowned head. What authority on earth was ever consecrated by so many kingly acknowledgments, or established by such glori-

ous labours ? One man alone protested against it, but he has expiated his crime chained to a rock by those same kings of Europe, who have since proscribed those principles they then sanctioned ! What a triumph of inconsistency ! But absolute power was then on the point of being annihilated. Monarchs, clergy, nobility, trembled through all their ranks at their approaching ruin, and eagerly courted popularity by professing liberal ideas.—Alas ! they obtained it, and the people have paid dearly for their generous efforts !

Whilst our armies, and those of our British allies had been clearing the land of the invaders, the constituent Cortes during the three years of their sittings had been employed in services not less necessary to the happiness of the country ; namely, in adapting our ancient constitution to the present habits of the people, and reforming the numberless abuses that had crept into every department. When they first entered on the exercise of their duties, they found the whole

Peninsula overrun with invaders, without an army or government, money or credit ; a confused and barbarous system of legislation ; the Council of Castile and the Inquisition in the full exercise of their powers ; in a word, universal anarchy.—But when on the 14th of September, 1814, they resigned their power, they left their country a victorious army ; an established credit ; a government whose efficiency had been well tried in the long and painful struggle in which we had just triumphed ; the legislative separated from the executive power, and the judicial from the civil ; which till then the corruption of them all had confounded together ; in short, they left a monarchy, tribunals, and laws.

Spain having thus resumed her rank among civilized nations, might hope that the influence of her reformed constitution, and the gradual reduction of the monasteries and mayorazgos would encourage those arts, sciences and commerce, which adorn, enlighten, and enrich an

empire, and which the long misrule of a despotic and superstitious government had almost annihilated. Never did any political power accomplish more at such a critical moment, and in the midst of so many dangers, than did the Extraordinary Cortes; and however imperfect their principal work may really be, the glory of having dried up many tears, and caused none to flow, can never be refused them.—Where is the power on earth that appears in the page of history thus unstained by blood or crime?

CHAPTER XI.

Now is Rome fallen indeed !

Cato.—ADDISON.

I SHALL now present the reader with the Marquis's letter to Don Ignacio. It gives a more faithful picture of that momentous crisis than I could attempt, and at the same time shows the sentiments of a humane, liberal, and enlightened man.

“ MY BELOVED FRIEND,

“ After the glorious termination of our painful struggle, in which every Spaniard has suffered more or less, I would fain look forward to the renewal of that frank and social intercourse, which used in happier times to be our delight ;

but the appearance things have lately assumed check my hopes.

“ By this time you must have been informed of the barbarous conduct of the French at Agreda. More fortunate, however, than my fellow townsmen, who were shot by my side, my life was spared by Darquier in hopes of getting a handsome ransom from my family ; but that monster dying shortly after we reached Logroño, I was sent with an escort to Vittoria as a prisoner of war, and thence conducted to France, where I remained in one of the depôts till the conclusion of the war, when I hastened to this capital, anxious to see with my own eyes the regeneration of the Spanish people. Alas ! how have all my hopes vanished ! and how has the bitterness of my disappointment been augmented by seeing my worthless brother, Don Facundo, leading the demagogues who have brought about the ruin of their country by every imaginable crime ! I do not mean to dwell on the various parts he has acted ; though

unfortunately they are all too well known to me. Such a detail would be no less painful to you than to me. It will be enough for me to say that wherever a mob was raised or a plot hatched to subvert our institutions, he was either the manager or the instigator.

“ I arrived at Madrid a short time after the ordinary Cortes began their sittings. The regency had followed them, and this removal was a triumph for the servile party. The industrious and rich Caditans^a loved the institutions reared under the protection of their ramparts, and were naturally enough afraid, that the indignant and indolent populace of Madrid, not understanding them, would be prejudiced against them. This fear, however, vanished, when they saw the whole population rushing to meet our legislators and receive them with shouts of joy. Large branches of the palm tree were waved before them, the carriages were unharnessed,

^a The people of Cadiz are so called.

and the members of the Cortes carried in triumph in the arms of the people.

“The respect so eagerly expressed by the artisans, merchants, secular clergy, titled men of Castille, and a multitude of illustrious personages, discouraged the ecclesiastical faction, that kept a sullen and threatening silence. But it was not in their nature easily to abandon their plans. They knew very well, that institutions live longer than men. They, therefore, began secretly to assemble in the mendicant convents, which offered them many secure places of rendezvous, for the purpose of forming their plots. An army of friars attacked in every possible manner the constitutional opinions. Anonymous pamphlets, scandalous libels, sermons, and pious bribes, were the means resorted to to promote their object. They even did not scruple to employ perfidy to accomplish their ends.^a

^a Witness Antillon, who died afterwards in a dungeon, into which the King and his faction had thrown him.

“Shortly after my arrival in the month of January, one of the four annual fairs was held. If you have never seen one of those wretched exhibitions, which nevertheless attract an immense concourse of people from the neighbouring villages, you may form some notion of it, if you fancy the great street of Alcala covered on each side with old and worm-eaten articles of furniture, the commonest delft ware, rotten clothes, rusty nails, torn books, battered cooking utensils, wretched daubs of pictures ; the whole offered for sale by people looking still more tattered and miserable. A great concourse of peasants, however, always attend it, and the clergy seized on this favourable opportunity for inflaming the minds of these honest, but credulous people, as one necessary means of forwarding their projects. Ostolaza, Martinez, Velez, and other disaffected and factious priests, went about raising mobs amongst the peasants of different provinces, and instigating them to take up arms in defence of their king and religion.—

‘The King our Lord,’ said they, ‘will soon appear upon his throne, and only then shall we find again our place in the church of Christ; then only shall Spain cease to be the den of heresy. We shall again see the Pope’s nuncio, and receive as formerly indulgences from the Holy Father for our past and future sins. The philosophers, who have had the audacity to destroy the holy tribunal of the faith, to disown their God, or in other words to become devils, like Judas, will be excommunicated and deprived of all christian rites; and the immense wealth which they have stolen from their countrymen, will be shared among you, who alone are worthy of the benefits both of heaven and earth.’

“To the soldiery similar speeches were made, taking care to remind them of the pre-eminence given by the constitutionalists to the civil powers over the military. They repeated to them that imprudent expression of a deputy, who in discussing the theory of standing armies, said, that soldiers were only ‘assassins

with wages.' The troops easily forgot the benefits they had received from the congress, and repeated that saying with all the gall of injured feelings, heightened by the malice of those public disturbers. Some of the men were seen standing at the doors of the *tavernas*,^a with a cigar in their mouths, insulting every passenger whom they imagined a partisan of the Cortes ; shaking hands with the *lavapies*, and soldiers that passed by, and distributing money and tobacco among them. A crowd of beggars, lame, blind, and crippled, participated in their gifts. A handful of chesnuts to some, a glass of wine to others, and a dinner invitation to a *figon*,^b to those who were the chiefs of the mob, obtained their suffrages and support. Thus did this faction recruit their forces. Some monks introduced this rabble into the galleries of the Cortes, from whence they shook their daggers at the deputies who spoke in favour of the reform

^a Places where wines are sold.

^b An eating house.

of abuses; but the deputies confiding in the justice of their cause, went on with their debates, unmoved at the threats of these anarchical demagogues.

“About this time the Duke of San Carlos^a brought to Madrid the treaty signed by the King, his master, on the 11th December, 1813, with Napoleon, and which his Majesty in his letters to the Regency had represented as more advantageous than any the Cortes could ever obtain after all their numerous victories. The conditions of that treaty were, to withdraw himself from the alliance of the other monarchs, particularly from that of Great Britain, whom he was to compel to quit the posts which her army occupied in the Pyrenees, and to fortify Napoleon against the crowd of enemies by whom he was surrounded. Moreover, in that singular treaty, the King pledged himself to reinstate in their offices and dignities all the partisans of the intruder—men who, by joining our invaders,

^a One of the inmates of Valengay.

have justly drawn on themselves public indignation. The first of these conditions violated the public faith, and the second insulted the feelings of the nation. The Cortes refused, without a dissenting voice, to accede to either. Serviles and liberals were all unanimous ; even those who were shortly after raised to the ministry to secure the empire from absolute power, were foremost in refusing their vote. Consequently the Duke de San Carlos returned to his master, vexed and disappointed at the unfortunate issue of his mission.

“ On the 24th of March, 1814, as you well know, King Ferdinand and the Infantes entered Spain amidst the rejoicings of a nation, who, proud and happy in having by their heroism recovered their sovereign, gave themselves up to the hope of seeing the public prosperity established on a lasting basis. Meanwhile, however, the serviles were weaving a machination that will remain as memorable as the calamities by which it was followed. Those members of

the Cortes who had been the first to insist on having the Deputy Reyna tried, for declaring on one occasion, that the King, who had received his absolute power from his ancestors, would resume it as soon as he put his foot on the Spanish territory, were now busy in drawing up an address, or rather an act of accusation against their colleagues, in which they protested against all that had been done during the King's absence, and requested him to recur to force, in order to overturn the system of which they had called themselves the friends. Mozo y Rosales^a was the first to sign it, and after him some forty members.^b

The minds of the people now fluctuated in a painful uncertainty. Despotism or liberty, civil war or anarchy, were before us ; and the highest

^a The notorious Marquis de Mataflorida.

^b When the restoration of absolutism was consummated, the number rose to sixty-nine, that is, to hardly the third part of the assembly, who received the name of Persians, in consequence of the pedantic quotation that decorates the preamble of their pitiful manifesto.

interests of the nation depended on the decision. Meantime the King, during his march, the very slowness of which had something sinister in it, did not drop a word that could either calm the fears or confirm the doubts of the people. His silence alone betrayed some of his thoughts. A multitude of grandees, with the Infantado at their head, and prelates and superiors of religious orders, hastened to meet him ; but the Cardinal Bourbon, chief of the government, was alone officially sent by the Cortes and the Regency to compliment him in their name.

“ As I would not accompany those personages to Valencia, I cannot say what occurred on their arrival there ; but all the letters I have seen on the subject agree in stating that the Cardinal was treated in the most indecorous manner by every one about the King, as well as by the King himself.

“ At last, the for ever memorable decree of the 4th of May was signed, which, in a moment, swept away our new institutions, and declared

the code promulgated at Cadiz, guilty of *leze majeste*. The Ostolazas, the Calderons, the Joaquin Perezes, the Bishop of Pamplona, and other colleagues of theirs, who only a month before had all unanimously voted for the trial of the political chief of Madrid, accused of having violated the constitution, and who had appealed in proof of their sincerity, to the sacred code, to the oath they had all taken, to religion, and to their country, were actually the authors of this decree; and a few days afterwards they, and Ostolaza in particular, were foremost in throwing their fellow deputies into dungeons! Yet this decree, far from proclaiming the triumph of the absolutists, seemed to announce that of their rivals. All the rights of the nation were still acknowledged, and all their liberties promised. Never, indeed, was despotism more eloquently reprobated. In fact the new government began its career by denouncing curses upon its own head.

“A rumour now spread in the capital, that the troops commanded by the old general Eguia, one of the members of the constituent Congress, who had always voted for the popular liberty and the new Constitution, were marching towards Madrid, and that Elio, after writing some days before to the Sovereign Congress—“that throughout his government of Valencia, the people blessed the sacred code, as containing the dearest rights of the people,”—had just concluded a bargain with absolute power, to lead his army to overturn the sacred code. Two addresses were sent to the king, supplicating him by his return to put an end to the public alarms, and again representing the Constitution as the only gateway of salvation. These two addresses, both posterior to the manifesto of the forty members, were signed by five of the most violent of those who had drawn up that secret document; two of whom had been elected by the whole assembly to the presidency and secre-

taryship of the Cortes ! The system that was hatching was indeed worthy of having as its heralds, perjury, perfidy and ingratitude.

“ These messages obtaining no answer from the King, no one doubted now that a *coup d'état* was on the point of being struck. At last he set off, accompanied by the most sinister rumours. Nothing was talked of but bloody executions, imprisonments and political auto-da-fes.

“ Madrid had now been five entire weeks in the most anxious expectation. A thousand well founded apprehensions began to damp the pleasure that every Spaniard anticipated at seeing his monarch. The regency, the deputies, the chiefs of the constitutional party, all now perceived the storm that was ready to burst over their heads. They assembled to deliberate on the dangers and calamities that threatened the country. Several generals dear to our glory, some titled persons of Castille, and even some grandees demanded publicly, that, in case of

necessity the country should defend her laws. All her troops, except Elio's division, and the whole of her militia, were on the side of the Constitution. All Europe had acknowledged the nation's rights, and sanctioned them; she, therefore, had a right to treat, and defend herself by force of arms.

“ A mistaken moderation, however, and a fatally erroneous notion, that the moral beauty of the liberal system was sufficient of itself to ensure success, urged some deputies to speak against maintaining by an armed force the rights of the nation.—‘ Not a drop of blood,’ said one of them, ‘ shall be shed, unless it be our own on the scaffold !’

“ This speech, doubtless prompted by a noble feeling, was highly applauded; its spirit was caught and followed up. But at that moment such generous devotedness was worse than Quixotic; the exigencies of the time required that firm and decisive steps should be taken, to secure what we had so dearly purchased. And

as to the fear of shedding blood,—who can be so blind as not to see, that the consequences of such a conduct as that recommended must be, that the blood of thousands will flow, and the country be thrown into an abyss of wretchedness for centuries to come !

“Towards evening it was rumoured that the vanguard of Eguia was only a few leagues distant from the capital. The serious alarms raised even in the most confiding minds by this silent march, were but too well founded. On the 10th of May the sun set for the last time on Constitutional Spain !—On that memorable day, a furious mob, headed by a legion of friars and some manolos, ran from street to street, demanding with loud vociferations the blood of the traitors and heretics. The watermen, the muleteers and beggars, always ready to plunder and assassinate, shouted, “the absolute King for ever !” “Death to the Nation !” Terror preceded and followed these cries. The houses were attacked under the pretext of

pursuing the enemies of God and the King. The most respectable citizens found themselves exposed to the insults of an infuriated rabble, and their lives in danger. The hall of the Cortes was attacked, and in a moment the statues of Moderation, Justice, Truth, Force, fell dashed into a thousand pieces ; but that of the *Nation*^a for a moment kept its place.

“ The crowd, throwing a rope round the neck of this statue, dragged it along, bestowing on it blows and maledictions, till they reached the place of judicial executions. Here they erected a scaffold, where after a mock trial and condemnation, the figure was decapitated ;—the whole of this parricidal farce being performed by priests, monks, fury-like women and ragged beggars. Who knows but the reality of this

^a It was represented by a female form seated on the Spanish lion, which held the globe of the world between its paws. The arms were a flambeau and an oar, and the brow of the figure was encircled with a diadem composed of Castilian towers, surmounted by a cross.

parody may be reserved for the liberators of their country and of their king? But all was not yet over. The Nation had lost only its head; the body was now dragged through the mud to the Plaza Mayor, (the same in which Philip II. sat smiling over the bloody holocausts of the Inquisition,) and the surrounding houses were immediately entered and robbed of their furniture to make fuel for the stake. The statue of the Nation being now tied to it, in a moment was enveloped in flames, to the infinite delight of the inquisitors and monks who were present. It seemed as if the Arbueses, the Torrequemadas with their seven colleagues, had all risen from the tomb to preside at this parody on their bloody tribunal. I notice these facts to give you a more correct idea of the detestable excesses of which an ignorant mob is capable, when led on by such infuriated demagogues.

“The men who held the reins of the State in the name of the King, those who sat in the hall

of the Cortes, in the tribunals, in the supreme councils, unexpectedly found themselves loaded with chains. Eugia fulfilled his task faithfully. He served as an instrument to overturn the institutions which had received his vote, and to which he had plighted his oaths. His troops tore with their parricidal arms the laws of their country, and dashed to pieces the sacred tribune, invading, with a fury reprov'd perhaps by their own consciences, the palaces, tribunals of justice, and above all, the prisons, from which they drew their principal assistance to conquer for despotism.

“ Three entire days elapsed in this dreadful state of anarchical horror and alarm. The daily gazettes of the servile party were full of false and scandalous criminal accusations against the liberals. They published, along with the Republican Constitution, which they said had been secretly adopted by them, a description of the uniforms of consuls and senators, which had also been found in their houses. Fray Augustin de

Castro, in his periodical, called, "The sentry of La Mancha," gave a detail of the crimes that the constitutional prisoners *intended* to commit, and said with a wilful malice, that he had received that information from the prisoners themselves under the faith of confession!

"The nobility, the bishoprics, the academies the army, each furnished its contingent of victims. Never did the abodes of crime open their gates to nobler guests; and the court, which had secretly given these orders, tired with dragging the Cardinal Bourbon tied to their car as the captive of the capitol, decreed his exile also. Meantime the King pursued his march, surrounded by all the foreign ambassadors, and at length on the 14th of May, he marched into the capital, surrounded by Elio's bayonets, and amidst such pomp as I have described. Shouts of "Death to the liberals," invocations to absolute power, blasphemies against the nation and the Cortes, were the only cries that struck the

ear of the delighted monarch in his way to the palace. Yet notwithstanding all this, the virtuous citizens blessed his arrival as if it had been that of the Messiah ! They hoped that all the horrors to which they had been hitherto exposed, would now be at an end ; and that the solemn promise held out in the decree of the fourth, would not fail of being performed, and would thus re-establish the empire of order and the laws. Nay, there were some so credulous as to believe that under the reign of such a great and excellent prince, citizens might not regret the loss of the sacred code that secured their rights and liberties !

“ Such are the melancholy events I came to witness ; instead of the consolidation of our so universally applauded institutions. But, alas ! who could ever for a moment have believed, that Ferdinand, whose chains had just been broken at the expense of two millions of lives, should march to the capital, not like a grateful monarch,

sensible of the obligations he owes to his people, but like a tyrant at the head of a factious army, destroying the means by which he had been placed on his throne!—not like the father of his people, who, afflicted at the immense sacrifices which his liberation has cost, returns to console them, and make some compensation for their incalculable privations and sufferings, by yielding to their just wishes, and adopting institutions suitable to the age in which we live; but like an usurper who first established his power by perfidy, and afterwards raises his throne on the scaffold of his victims,—delighting in nothing but dungeons, chains, torturing wheels, tears, proscriptions, and blood! Thus then is unhappy Spain to be desolated by the idol she had placed on her altar!

“What honorable or enlightened man can now wish to remain an hour longer in this wretched land? Yet, whither shall he fly to hide his head, that he may not be detected and carried

to a dungeon,—perhaps to the scaffold ! Alas ! and is this the recompense for our heroic efforts, toils, and sufferings ? The annals of the most barbarous ages record nothing at once so sanguinary and so perfidious as these black proceedings,—they stand single in the page of history.

“ For ourselves, my dear Ignacio, happy may we still think ourselves, if we can escape the raging storm, sheltered under some humble shade, where our hearts may meet and weep in silence over the evils that afflict our unhappy country ! ”

A similar drama to that of Madrid, acted by the monks and serviles at most of the large towns, proved the fidelity of the picture drawn by the Marquis. Every where hundreds of the most respectable citizens were buried in dungeons ; and though several divisions and cities manifested an intention to resist, terror stretched its iron hand over them, and their submission

was insured. Thus every where, notwithstanding the illusory promises, which, in fact, were only the auxiliaries of despotism, the constitutional edifice fell under the blows of the monks and the rabble!

CHAPTER XII.

All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office to black funeral.

Romeo and Juliet.

To return now to our family circle,—the time fixed for the celebration of my arrival being come, and Raymundo having written that his duties would detain him a month longer, it was resolved that our parties should no longer be deferred. Accordingly, our friends were invited to a sumptuous refresco, which was to be followed by a grand dance.

The company arrived—the ladies adorned with all the charms that art could give to heighten those of nature ; and the gentlemen in their per-

riwigs, court dresses, and swords hanging diagonally, the points upwards, like the spikes of the *chevaux de frise*. The ladies, as usual, took their seats on the chairs and sofas, ranged near the walls ; and the gentlemen promenaded in the middle, showing their handsome legs, while the attendants seemed to serve the refresco with as much pleasure as if they themselves were the guests. Anton in particular, who was also allowed to have that honor, went about with the salvers, leaping and chattering like a magpie, and dealing his jokes right and left to the ladies with that winning impudence of his, at which it was impossible to be offended, and which highly diverted them. Now and then a satirical sally on some particular point of a gentleman's toilet, told loud enough for the rest to hear, discomposed the gravity of the most serious, and nettled the object of his ridicule ; but the facility with which the humorous Anton brought out a well turned compliment, soon regained the favor of the irritated guest.

At length the ball opened; and though I could not forget that among the ladies there was still wanting one to complete my happiness, yet as it would have been unpardonable in me to have seemed melancholy on such an occasion, I had presented my hand to a young lady, and was about to lead the dance.—But, alas! our country's evil genius still hovered about our heads—and seemed to whisper that rejoicings were not befitting in a land like ours—where only tears should be seen, and lamentations heard!

As we were proceeding in the dance, I observed a servant approach my father, and whisper something in his ear, which seemed to startle him. Knowing as I did the imminent danger that attended the life of every honorable man throughout the country, and apprehending some calamity, I took the first opportunity of following them out of the ball room. Don Ignacio had just entered a little room, the doors of which he was shutting after him, when I came, and begged to be admitted.

Our surprise was not small at meeting there the Marquis clad in a postillion's dress, as if he had just alighted from his horse.—“You see me in this apparel,” said he, throwing his arms round my father's neck, “because having no time to lose, I thought it wiser to hasten and save my friend. In two or three days *a decree of amnesty* will be published, proscribing four thousand liberals and ten thousand families of Josephinos, with confiscation of their property! But this,” added he, trying to conceal his starting tears, “is not all,—the news I have to communicate to you requires all your fortitude to bear; but since it is the will of Providence, we must, my dear Lara, conform ourselves to it, and again exhibit that resignation which we have been called upon to show on former occasions!”

My father listened calmly to this preamble; but I, unable to imitate his patience, could not help exclaiming—“For God's sake, Sir, keep us no longer in this mortal suspense.”

“Wait, my child,” said my father with a smile, “you will soon hear all.”

“My dear friend,” said Don Lorenzo, throwing his arms again round my father’s neck, “you must this very moment depart,—you have not an instant to lose—the king has already signed the sentence of your death,—fly quickly if you wish to spare your family and friends the horror of seeing you dragged to a dungeon, and from thence to a scaffold ; I have a horse ready for you,—believe me, depart this instant, and take leave of no one !”

“What is my crime ?” cried my father with a steady voice, “what should oblige me to fly ? Have I not faithfully served my king and country ? Have I not given up my property to defend our independence, and restore Ferdinand to the throne ? Have not my houses been pillaged or burnt, my land laid waste, my family exposed to poverty and wretchedness for my attachment to him ? When I was forced to accept an office from the intruder, did I not ren-

der my country all the services that lay in my power?—and send my children to the field of battle, even before they had sufficient strength to raise a sword? Can these facts be denied? and shall I then fly like a criminal, who fears his just punishment?—No—Innocence is my shield.”

“What you have now stated,” cried the Marquis, “is precisely your crime;—patriotism and virtue are the dreaded enemies of tyrants. In vain, then, will you seek protection from them.—Again let me say there is no time to lose. Your life must be saved,—your family, your friends, and your country have claims upon it.—Fly quickly.”

“Father, my good father,” cried I, in an agony of tears, “Don Lorenzo is right. Let me conduct you out of a wretched country, which your death cannot save. Enough victims have already fallen.—Think of your beloved daughters,—without you they would remain de-

solate ; for your sons would fall in avenging their father."

The unhappy Don Ignacio remained silent a while, and then falling on his knees, raised his eyes and his joined hands towards heaven in fervent prayer, after which he got up, and said in a calm resigned manner,—“ I am ready, take me where you will.”

Don Lorenzo pressed his hand, and led him out by a back door, to the place where he had a horse in waiting for him, at a little distance without the gates of the town. I was also to follow as soon as my horse was ready. In traversing the ball room, where my poor mother and sisters, unconscious of my father's fate, were endeavouring to make their guests happy, tears were ready to start from my eyes. I hastened through ; but my favourite sister seeing me, ran after, and gently reproved me for my absence. I threw my arms round her waist, kissed her blooming cheek, and trying to command my

voice, promised to return soon. She smiled, and was satisfied. I then flew to the stable, saddled my horse, and left that home to which I had so lately returned with such fair prospects of happiness!

Having reached the appointed place, we bid Don Lorenzo a tender adieu, and received his solemn promise to act as a father to my sisters, and to console them in the desolate condition in which they were left. We then set off as quickly as the darkness of the night would allow, and in a few hours arrived at a little cottage, well known to us ; as we had often taken our rural meals there when in happier times we went on our fishing excursions. The host, a venerable old man, being much attached to us, my father determined on alighting there, and taking a little rest, of which he stood much in need. Our good host was not a little surprised at seeing us at that hour of the night ; but betraying no curiosity to know the reason of our extraordinary visit, he welcomed us, and thinking only of ren-

dering as comfortable as possible the poor accommodations of the small hut, most willingly offered his truckle bed that was in one corner of the room, and trimmed the solitary *candil*, that hung in the chimney. After a few hours' rest, we got up, rewarded our host for his hospitality, and again pursued our journey.

It was now day-break, and as we travelled on, we recognized many spots in which we had spent happy hours with our family and friends. We were now going over them as fugitives, perhaps never to return ! And what was our crime ? The sacrifice of every thing, in defence of our country, and for the restoration of that king from whose hands we received this recompense ! Now and then a sigh would escape from the oppressed bosom of my unfortunate father, as he glanced over these scenes. Often he endeavoured to conceal his starting tears from my sight, but if our eyes met, they could no longer be restrained. Few know the torments of the proscribed victim who sees himself exposed to the

fury of his persecutors. Every living being he meets wears the face of an informer, or an executioner. My heart indignantly revolted at the necessity of fearing every thing. Full of youth and vigour, I could have defied terror itself.

Obliged to avoid the large towns as much as possible, we left Burgos to our left. I had been there after the retreat of the French, and seen the handsome monument erected by a French General, of the name, I believe, of Tierry, to our Cid Campeador; that which the inhabitants had raised upon the spot where his house is supposed to have stood, having fallen under the cannon of his countrymen. Burgos is also the birth place of our celebrated Captain, Ferdinand Gonzales, to whose memory a triumphal arch of very good taste was erected in the time of Charles V.; which is still to be seen.

A little beyond Miranda, on the road to Vittoria, stands a handsome marble column, perhaps rather too pompous for the subject, the inscription of which points out the limits be-

tween Castille and the provinces of Alava and Biscay. Beyond is a steep mountain, to the top of which we ascended, and on the other side saw the villages of Puebla and Armiñon. Having left them behind, we crossed the river Arriaza, by a stone bridge, on the left of Vittoria, and proceeded onwards in our journey, without entering this city.

We were now fairly travelling through the best cultivated country in Spain. The three provinces (as the whole of Biscay is called, in consequence of its division into Alava, Guipuzcoa, and Biscay) are in no way indebted to nature for any lavishing partiality, as to soil; but they have always been the asylum of industry and freedom,—the two inseparable companions of prosperity. For the space of thirty leagues from Vittoria, to the Bidasoa, some new villages, hamlets, or villas, incessantly enliven the varied landscape, whose hills and valleys exhibit all the effects of unwearied and successful cultivation.

I had been over those sites before, but it had been in the turbulent times of war, when the hand of industry, instead of holding the scythe or the reaper's hook, clasped the sword or the musket. Yet even then, the laborious Biscayan women would not allow the soil to remain uncultivated, while they had strength to fertilize it by their own labours. Now, however, when peace cheered the husbandman's hopes, every thing had assumed a more animated aspect, and I was never wearied of admiring and praising the industry of the people, and their habits of freedom.

“This love of liberty which you so much admire in them,” said my father, “is chiefly owing to the unpropitious nature of their soil; their motives for exertion, in order to procure themselves the comforts of life, being great, they are naturally more jealous to preserve what they have thus hardly earned. Hence that energy so highly honorable to their character, with which they maintain what they call

their freedom, or their political privileges, which even oblige the sovereign to exchange the title of king for that of señor. In more than one instance we have seen that they paid no attention to the commands of the court, or to its supreme decisions, when deemed incompatible with their own ancient statutes.

“Each of the three provinces possesses its own local government, and in those of Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa, the orders of the king can be executed only after receiving the sanction of the provincial administration. Each annually summons its general assembly, to which the administration delivers an account of its application of the public money. This assembly is formed by the deputies from all the districts which have a right to send any, and are chosen by *ayuntamientos* or municipal corporations, the members of which are also annually elected by the whole body of qualified citizens. To possess this right of election, a certain degree of property is indispensable. Then again, each of

these provinces possesses also a peculiar tribunal of justice. In that of Biscay, properly so called, there is an appeal from the sentence of the corregidor, to a magistrate with the title of Juez Mayor, who is at the same time guardian of their privileges. But unfortunately, this magistrate is appointed by the king; and his only hope of attaining those superior distinctions to which he too often aspires, resting on his securing the favor of the court, the interests of the community are but too apt to be sacrificed to his own.

“ These principles of democratical and representative government, though by no means equal to what many excellent politicians conceive desirable, gave rise to the idea, during the invasion of Biscay by the French army in 1793, and the consequent negociations for peace, that the provinces in which such principles were entertained and acted upon, were adapted by policy, as well as contiguity, to form a constituent part of the French republic; which, how-

ever, was by no means the case. Jealous as the Biscayans are of their liberty, they are cordially attached to the Spanish monarchy; the independence of which they have always maintained to the last extremity. In reference to the financial circumstances of the three provinces," my father added—"they tax themselves for all the purposes of their own necessary expenditure, and pay to the king no other impost than a species of donation, which till before the invasion was but rarely demanded, and which had it not been moderate, would certainly have been withheld. This donation is levied by the states among the different districts, conformably to a ratio, which frequently undergoes new modifications.

"Then," he continued, "on every subject relating to their common interest, we see the three provinces jointly contribute their exertions. All the great public works are carried on in this manner. Their roads, for instance, which are kept in such high repair, even after such a disas-

trous war, and the continual passage of troops and convoys backwards and forwards, could not be enumerated as among the most excellent in Europe, were it not for this union between the three provinces. Yet few countries, in this respect, present greater difficulties to be surmounted, these provinces being one immense prolongation of mountains, extending even to the borders of Castille. To the completion of a road through such a country, precipitous descents or craggy prominences opposed, in many places, the most formidable obstacles; to surmount which the application of the greatest perseverance was requisite.

“Thus distinguished by their roads, cultivation, and political privileges, the Biscayans are still more distinguished by their industry; which is chiefly exercised on the principal produce of the country,—iron. To complete the art of extracting and working this metal, recourse has been had to foreign correspondence, lectures, and travels. At Bergara, there was a patriotic

school, where the science of metallurgy was taught by the most able masters, some of whom have been invited for this purpose from neighbouring kingdoms. Young chemists have been sent to Sweden and Germany from the manufactories established in these provinces; and even from the bowels of a foreign soil they have drawn information, which they have applied to the improvement of their country; a word which among them is something more than an empty name."

It is singular that the habits of the people of these provinces remain as pure as those of the most distant ages, as well as their language, which bears no analogy to the other idioms, and which, they say, is as old as their mountains. They have a religious veneration for the customs of their forefathers; and their independent mien, robust and healthy constitutions, affability and hospitality of manners, render them objects of interest and respect to the traveller who visits their country.

The natural beauty of their women, too, is heightened by their cleanliness. One sees the young Basques climbing over those steep paths, as lightly as stags, their feet naked, carrying their shoes under their arm, and on their head a burthen under the weight of which even a stout Gallego would sink. They go singing all the way, and at the same time knitting the ten coloured vest for their aged father. Before entering a town or village they never omit washing their feet in the neighbouring fountain or rivulet, and putting their shoes on. Their dress is neat and elegant, and they have their long hair plaited in two tresses, falling gracefully on each side of their shoulders.

There is in almost every village a large arena to play at ball. The natives of these provinces excel at a game, which requires as much vigour as agility. Frequently the inhabitants of one district challenge the other to play. The Guipuzcoans, who pride themselves on excelling all others, have frequent matches with the Nava-

rees, and even with the French Basques. Almost all the youths of the province flock then to the appointed spot, to dispute with their antagonists the honor of the triumph; which sometimes, however, ends by cudgelling one another; though generally the greatest order prevails at those meetings.

As we were approaching Ernany, on a Sunday afternoon, we met a large party of young men, all armed with their thick clubs, who were returning home from a ball match, which they had been playing with those of another village. They went on quietly, singing in their idiom the wild and plaintive notes of their mountain songs, when we heard the bold and defying *hujuju*,^a from the opposite hill. Immediately the whole party stopped, and answered that cry with another. The opposite band repeated it with double force, and being sent back to them again with equal spirit, the valley began now to

^a The warlike cry of the Mountaineers. The *j* in Spanish has a guttural sound.

resound with it. At last the two opposite parties came in sight of each other. They halted, and forming themselves in battle line, traced on the ground with their cudgels the limits that were to separate them, leaving a space of about fifty yards between each line. As soon as this was done, both parties rushed towards this space, and a most desperate scuffle ensued, in which the club fell right and left without mercy, till the first party we met, drove the others to the other side of their line, thus obtaining a complete victory over their antagonists.

The motives of this quarrel were, that the defying party, nettled at having lost their game at ball, thought, no doubt, they might have their revenge at cudgelling. On trial, however, they not only found themselves disappointed, but got a few broken heads, and sore shoulders into the bargain.

We were now approaching those elevated ramparts that separate our country from France, on whose magnificent beauty we gazed with a

melancholy pleasure. The tops of the Pyrenees bordering on the ocean are not clothed with perpetual snow, nor do you meet with those lofty rocks with their dashing torrents and bold cascades, those impenetrable amphitheatres, and endless abysses and precipices, which are the characteristics of the high Pyrenees. On the contrary, orchards, tillage, and rich meadows decorate the slopes of these mountains ; and their summits are crowned by numerous plantations, which, like verdant garlands, follow the elegant contours of the long chain, and form the most enchanting scenery. A few cliffs alone, that seem to lose themselves in the clouds, and sometimes arrest their progress, have not felt the fertilizing hand of man ; though the climbing goat is often seen treading on their almost perpendicular sides.

As you proceed, the eye wanders over fertile vallies, which become wider and wider at every step, and presents new and delightful prospects. Now it is a hamlet on the acclivity of a moun-

tain, so precipitous that the houses appear to be actually sliding down its sides. Then a small church, with its single bell, and a small turret for a steeple, peeps behind a chesnut tree. Further on a multitude of rivulets intersecting each other, form at length a bright lake, whose united waters flow gently on, carrying fertility with them. On every side elegant villas, the architecture of which is simple, but majestic, and picturesque shepherds' huts, grace the landscape. Indeed the Biscayans are particularly proud of possessing handsome dwellings, and many, even among those labouring classes who seek their livelihood throughout Spain, return at the end of a few years to their native places, and employ all the money they have saved in building a house: and if their funds prove insufficient to finish it, they again migrate, often three or four times, till the whole edifice is completed.

CHAPTER XIII

Ha! banishment? be merciful, say death;
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death; do not say banishment?

Romeo and Juliet.

ARRIVED at the summit of that long chain, which on one side joins the Pyrenees, and on the other serves as a barrier to the waves of the ocean, we beheld beneath our feet a vast and deep valley, furrowed by several branches of the Bidassoa. This river, from the passage of Behobie, flows in one straight channel between narrow mountains; but at about a league from that place, its waters suddenly spread over the wide bed made by the ebbings and flowings of the sea, in whose bosom they at last lose themselves. A little on the right hand, at the top of a mountain, stands the hermitage of St. Martial,

rendered celebrated by the last stand that the French eagle made against the combined armies ; in which affair I had the glory to share, my corps being then incorporated with General Freyre's division. A square tower, surrounded by a number of houses, decorates the bottom of the vale ; a little beyond it on the left is Irun, on the sea shore, and still further Fontarrabia, while the little bourg of Andaye is seen on the slopes of the hills that bound France.

The majesty of the mountains, the rich fertility of the valley, the variety of the landscape, the numerous steeples that mark the abode of man, and that immense ocean unrolling itself before the eye, form altogether a sublime scene, fit for the boundary of two great empires.

Having taken a guide through these mountains as far as the French frontier, we soon arrived at the bridge of Oholdizum. " This little stream," said the guide, " forms the boundaries of our land and France. Nothing can be

finer than the country beyond those mountains. You will be delighted with it !”

Alas ! he knew not that he was speaking to exiles ! My father, overpowered at the idea, fell on his knees at the foot of a small stone cross that stands on the bridge, and clasping his hands, remained some minutes motionless. I leaned on the balustrade, hiding my face with my hands, to conceal the tears that ran down my cheeks, while our guide stood contemplating my father with an air of astonishment and respect.

When a man is thus driven from his native country, and a barrier raised between him and the home of his forefathers, he seems to leave his whole existence behind. Mountains, rivers, and plains, separate him from all that is dear to him. Every thing that spoke either of himself, of his attachments, or even of his illusions, is left on the other side, while on this, all is silent and cold. While I reflected on

the services and sacrifices made by Don Ignacio to his country, which at that moment only embittered his grief, I shuddered at contemplating the recompense awarded them. He could no longer tread on the soil of Spain, on that soil which he had enriched by his industry, and the independence of which he had maintained with the first and best of its citizens. A persecution, as unjust as it was cruel, deprived his family of his exertions and protection at a moment when they stood most in need of them. He must bid, perhaps, an eternal adieu to every thing that was dear to his heart ; in one word, to his country ! These, and other sentiments, crowded in my mind, till my oppressed bosom could hardly contain my sighs,—but I heard other sobs, and forgot my own grief—My father shed tears.—There is in the tears of an aged and venerable man something so moving, that the most cold-hearted of men cannot but sympathize with him. For me, I could scarcely bear to look on that afflicted father, in whom age had frozen the hopes of youth. He appeared to me like a

benighted traveller, who, faint and exhausted, lays himself down to repose for the last time. His distress struck me as a strong example of the injustice of the world. I might weep ; but the energies of youth, and the hope of other days, would sooner or later dry up my tears. But how could *he* hope, when he saw nothing before him save the tomb ?

“Doubtless,” said he, rising from the ground, “this cross was placed here to remind the unhappy exile, that there is yet a happier home from which the injustice of man will not drive him.”

“Father !” exclaimed I, “though men who have lived but to serve their fellow beings may lose their country, the God of Justice will sooner or later avenge the proscribed. The day of your return, and that of their punishment, cannot be far off.”

“Alas !” exclaimed he, with a profound sigh, “at sixty-six years of age, it is late to change one’s country ; a man then can change only for the tomb !”

I felt my heart torn by these just complaints, —“ Go,” added he, “ to the Spanish banks, and fill this gourd with water. I feel a thirst that nothing but water from that side can quench.”

I took the gourd, and hastened to obey him ; feeling that there are moments in a man’s life, when his very weaknesses ought to be respected as virtues.

We now proceeded on our journey, and having reached towards evening a small village on the right of St. Jean de Luz, took up our quarters there for the night. Next morning very early I rose, and wishing to take a last view of my native land, left my father to his repose, and directed my steps towards the top of the nearest mountain.

Above the opposite summits the first rays of light began to shine, and the azure clouds, scattered toward the east, to assume a variety of brilliant colours. The delightful morning breezes refreshed the air. I could hear the

billows break against the beach, and the distant cries of the fishermen die upon the waves. Both on my right hand and on my left a thick cloud of vapours, having the appearance of so many mountains of snow, rose and intercepted my view ; but full in front of me I could discover my country, shining in all the brilliancy of the rising sun. The heavens, the earth, and the ocean all looked as cheerful and serene as my heart was agitated and sorrowful. The hope of seeing nature itself share in one's grief, is so natural a feeling to the unhappy, that I felt hurt, as by an unkindness, to see the country of my birth thus gay and cheerful, when I was driven from it. I wept, but for a long time could not draw my eyes from that scene. At last I slowly bent my course down the mountain to the plain below, overpowered by these reflections.

On my arrival at the auberge, I did not find my father there, but a lively black-eyed servant maid told me in half French half Basque, that she had seen the old melancholy gentleman

enter the village church to hear mass, and that I was sure to find him there. In fact, on entering, I saw him kneeling in one corner of it, fervently praying. There was something in his look so resigned, that even an indifferent person must have been struck by it. His humble and sincere faith made him derive from his prayers his greatest consolation, and even enabled him to subdue for a while the bitterness of his just grief.

Having remained in the church till the end of the mass, I observed that the service was more awful here, than amidst the pomp and grandeur of our more magnificent temples. It is true there were not so many gilded saints and altars, so many images of the Virgin, decked in beautiful embroidered petticoats, so many superb paintings half spoiled for want of care; but there was more simplicity, a better distribution in the audience, and something strikingly religious in their attitudes. The men are separated from the women, as with the sectators of

the ancient law. They occupy a place round the nave of the church, railed off by a balustrade of oak; and the women are seen on their knees in the middle of the church. Some of the elderly matrons enjoy the privilege, granted only to age, of a chair, wherein they remain immoveably seated, wrapt up in their devotion; while the young ones, as soon as they hear the sound of the bell announcing the consummation, hide their faces with the sort of mantilla of cloth that falls from their heads to the ground.

No one who has not himself experienced it, can conceive the satisfaction and delight with which a traveller looks upon a country which he visits for the first time. Every thing attracts his notice, and pleasingly engages his attention. The face of the country, its natural productions, the animals, the men and their manners, all was new to me, or at least bore a new aspect; for even those objects with which I was most familiar, either from some peculiarity of the soil or climate, struck me as pos

sessing a character with which I had never before seen them invested.

Thus from our village to Bayonne, I found at every step something to turn aside my attention from the unhappy subject which was naturally uppermost in my thoughts. Among these objects were the *caquets-au-lait* we met on the road, the only kind of conveyance used in these mountains. These are two seats made of wattled osiers, laid across the back of a horse, one for the driver, and the other for the traveller. Both must be loaded and unloaded at the same time, for if the balance is lost, the girth is not strong enough to prevent an upset. The generality of the drivers of all the *caquets-au-lait* are the girls of Bearn, who, light, graceful and active, in their elegant costume and floating tresses, take care to charm the passing hour with their agreeable talk, at once free and reserved, and their lively and winning eyes. A great many are always posted at the gate of Bayonne, eagerly pressing forward and disputing among

themselves the conquest of the traveller, who is going either towards the rock of the lovers, the beaches of Bearitz, or the smiling slopes of the mountains.

On reaching Bayonne, we determined to remain there for some time, until we should receive news from our family, which at length we did in a very unexpected manner—namely, by the arrival of Raymundo. He had returned home one month after our flight, and had found all our father's property confiscated, and our mother and sisters living in a most reduced manner in her ruined house at Cigales. Deeply affected at such a scene, and naturally of a quick temper, some strong expressions escaped him, on the wanton cruelty of such dealings, and on the vengeance that must sooner or later await them. He was called to account for this before one of the secret commissions established by Ferdinand to judge of political crimes. These tribunals were not unlike the French *comités sanitaires révolutionnaires*, with this

difference, that those commissions of state, as they were called, being of a secret nature, were incomparably more oppressive and unjust.

To convey an adequate idea of them, it may be necessary to state, that of all the corrupt and oppressive tribunals restored by Ferdinand along with the barbarous and gothic system of administration, none were deemed capable of furnishing the authors of those persecutions with adequate means of accusation and revenge. It was, therefore, found necessary to create new commissions, which having no other object than that of gratifying the personal resentment of the judges who composed them, and of the leaders of the faction they served, (each of whom sent to the commission a list of the individuals who had excited his hatred) immediately fulminated their sentence against the prisoner; observing in their proceedings none of those forms which all civilized nations have adopted, to assist the judge in his decisions, and protect the rights of the innocent Thus imprison-

ment was followed by condemnation, the dungeons and presidios were filled with guiltless and honorable men, a great number of families were rendered miserable and fatherless, and the royal power became absolute master of the whole administration of justice, with no barrier to restrain its abuses or check its extravagance.

Raymundo, who saw there was no chance for him if he was not allowed to make his defence in public, demanded to be heard in open court, which request was not only refused, but he was ordered to leave the kingdom within a fortnight, on pain of death. Thus did Ferdinand recompense the services of most of the Spanish patriots, and people Europe with our fugitive citizens. Those who fought against Napoleon, and those who assisted him ;—the partizans of the Constitution of Joseph, and those of the Constitution of Cadiz, separated till then by an insurmountable barrier, met now in foreign countries, bereft of every thing they had possessed.

“ Our provinces,” added Raymundo, “ have been laid waste, our cities pillaged, our villages burnt, and a million of men sacrificed in the field of battle. Yet what have we gained by so many tears, and so much blood? The re-establishment of the ancient despotism, and of the ancient misery; the council of Castille; the Inquisition; the Jesuits, expelled by Charles III.; our former decrepit legislation; absolutism; torture; in a word, all which the unanimous voice of mankind has been reprobating for these hundred years back! We see the ministers of a God of Peace, preaching in his temples blood and assassination; lacqueys enriched with their masters’ property at the head of the faction, styling itself aristocratic and religious;—and above this scandalous scene is heard the voice of a father, holding out to the execration of Europe the usurpation of his son, and denouncing him in his criminal intention of starving his parent in his exile! Moreover the potentates of Europe, who, only a little while ago, extolled our

heroism so highly, and disputed the honour of our alliance, will hardly deign to receive our plenipotentiaries at their Congresses. They scorn to associate their magnificent grandeur, *trodden under Napoleon's feet, and recovered only by our efforts*, with the wretched insignificance of a Ferdinand. Some, however, have cast an insulting look of pity on our misfortunes, and have ordered their ambassadors to intercede for the Spanish patriots ; but no measures being taken by them to secure the lives of those unfortunate men, they are daily assassinated or destroyed.—Such is the actual state of things in our wretched country.”

Don Ignacio, who had calculated on Raymundo's residence at home, became now very anxious about his wife and daughters. As, therefore, I had not been included in the list of the proscribed, I volunteered to return home, and give them my protection. My father approved my resolution ; but cautioned me how I spoke.—“ Do always what is right,” said he,

“ but do not expose yourself and the remainder of the family by giving vent to the feelings of disgust and irritation, excited by the conduct of our oppressors.”

Having now embraced my dear father, and taken an affectionate leave of him, I again returned towards the Spanish territory, accompanied by Raymundo, as far as Saint Jean de Luz, where we parted,—he to accompany the exile into France, and I to return to that scarcely less unhappy portion of our family who were still permitted to remain on their native soil.

END OF VOL. II.

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